

LOVE

&

REVOLUTION

Creating Conscious Tribes

MARK THE MYSTIC ACTIVIST

I

We inhabit a world of relationships.

In this world, everything is relating with everything.

You sneeze in Barcelona, and a butterfly wing trembles in Istanbul.

Nothing therefore, is more important than the way we relate.

II

Sadly though, we tend to relate in ways we have been culturally conditioned to relate.

Cultures are relational systems.

They are codified systems of relating -

silently yet violently enforced by all upon all.

We tend to think, act, speak and relate to other people, and to reality itself,
in the strict and limited ways in which we have been conditioned.

III

If we want cultural change - societal, civilisational change -

but do not take all of this into account,

our social reforms will be superficial.

And we live in an era in which we are called to not only reform,

but to revolutionise the dominant global culture!

For this revolution to not just be a change of regime, or packaging,

we need mass-education in new ways of relating -

a project which begins, of course, as always, with ourselves.

IV

In what ways of relating do we need to educate ourselves?
In ways that acknowledge - not intellectually, but in the felt moment -
that everything is relating to everything -
that everything, and therefore everyone of us too, is connected, is in-connection.
We need to learn ways of relating that honour our interconnection -
our belonging to the One Same Whole.

V

And we need to educate ourselves in ways of relating that acknowledge -
not intellectually, but in the felt moment -
that we are all unique expressions of this interconnected, inter-relating whole -
in ways of relating that are conscious and present, and loving -
not sentimentally or romantically loving,
but naturally, effortlessly, indiscriminatingly loving.

VI

Since it is impossible to Educate Ourselves in Relating by ourselves,
we need to form self-educating Tribes.
The atmosphere, or energy field, of such Tribes -
generated by their conscious, connected, intimate relating,
is the energy field we need to cultivate
if we want more than superficial change -
if we want to co-create a conscious, connected, loving culture
for ourselves, our children, and those yet to come.

LOVE & REVOLUTIONON

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1

Conscious Tribes, Energy Fields

*Conscious Tribes are local groups of 10, 20, 30 people -
united spiritually/existentially,
united psychologically/emotionally,
and united creatively, in their action -
in the co-creation of a conscious culture.*

Many of us share the vision of a decentralised, conscious, community culture embedded in nature. But how to make it real - without going to live in an eco-village, or an intentional community? Or another way to put this question might be "how do we weave ourselves together? How do we weave a new social fabric?"

The Conscious Tribes proposal is to form small, local tribes aligned with the culture we wish to co-create. And not just aligned at the practical, physical, creative level of permaculture, eco-construction, local food production, alternative economics, and so on. Above all, I believe we need to risk 'becoming family', and loving each other, and risk being-loved by each other - and we need to learn to travel through The Great Mystery in deep intimacy with each other, while we're in the process of co-creating our new culture. Why?

Because travelling in this way, our hearts stay gentle. And that's the Vision we Share: the vision of a Gentle Hearted Culture. And because travelling in this way, we all become more authentically Ourselves. And because travelling in this way, we come to know Our Oneness. And because whatever culture we now co-create will be Made of Us.

So forming a Conscious Tribe isn't like setting up a club, or forming an association. It's about embarking upon a profound and intimate journey with others - the Journey, The Adventure of the Heart. Conscious Tribes are places of activism - of participation in the practical, real, physical co-creation of an alternative culture. And they are places of homecoming for the heart and soul - places that support us in living, in our everyday lives, in consciousness, humility, intensity, and love. Because then, as Gandhi said, We Are the Change.

This is perhaps the defining characteristic of Conscious Tribes - that they are active on four levels: the universal or spiritual or existential level of our interconnectedness and belonging; the psycho-emotional level of our individual and collective conditionings; the mental or intellectual level of our understandings and beliefs; and the material or physical level of our action in the world. Whenever they gather, Conscious Tribes give time to Nowness and Sacredness and Oneness. They give kind attention to their minds and emotions, and take good care of the shenanigans of their egos. And they advance their plans for the co-creation of an alternative community culture.

You could say Conscious Tribes embody a holistic or integral approach to community co-creation. And they do. But they are also more than that...

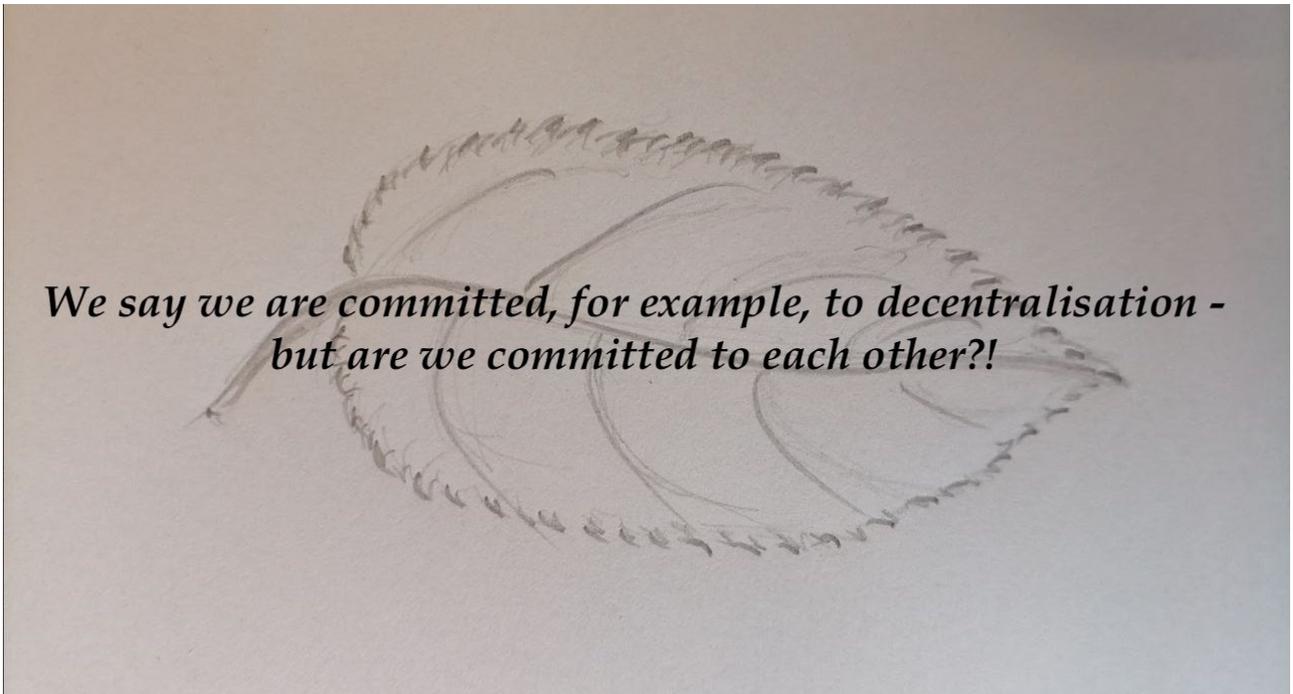
Because they attend lovingly to the spiritual, mental, emotional and physical levels of our being, they bring our consciousness, minds, hearts and bodies into alignment. Which implies a journey of individual transformation for everyone. Conscious Tribes become places of personal evolution.

And they're are more than that too! Because, as each individual evolves, so does the energy field of the Tribe - which then becomes more and more palpable, and powerfully supportive of everyone.

And they're more than that too!! The energy field of the Conscious Tribe also, inevitably, radiates out beyond the Tribe - and carries healing into the turmoil of the world - contributing to our collective evolution. The Tribe comes to see itself as a seed of a conscious culture to come.

You can form a Conscious Tribe, if you want. There's no need for any permissions! This book is essentially a resource to support you in doing just that.

*



*We say we are committed, for example, to decentralisation -
but are we committed to each other?!*

2

Non-Biological Siblings

A RECOGNITION

To truly transform the dominant global culture I believe that we have to learn to live as siblings - that we have to open to each other with the same unconditional embrace that many of us offer to our biological siblings - even though they might be very different from us.

This requires a great opening because we've been conditioned into a very constricted way of being. And this opening begins with one crucial recognition: that we each only have our own unique perception and experience of any moment.

From this one recognition, a whole series of other recognitions follow - that everyone has their own unique story and perspective, that nobody knows everything, that we do not know The Complete and Absolute Truth, that existence is A Great Mystery, that we are all part of that Great Mystery, that we are all equal, and so on.

To the degree this recognition becomes more than an intellectual understanding; to the degree we set out to live it - we naturally come to feel a non-sentimental, non-romantic Universal Love for others, for all other creatures, and for Existence Itself.

But when we first recognise that we only ever experience our own experience, if we're being honest with ourselves, we also recognise that we DON'T live our recognition - that we don't live moment to moment, breathing our own belonging to the Great Mystery... while driving a car, or in the office, or at the factory, or at home, or on the street... And we recognise that nor do we live relishing our own unique experience of The Great Mystery. We recognise that we live, generally speaking, run by the mind - in for the most part, a quite mundane state of consciousness.

In other words, we recognise the gap between our deepest knowing, and the way we live. And from here to there - from how we tend to be, to what we know we are - THERE Is the journey. There is the journey that we share as a Tribe. The journey of opening to ourselves, each other, the elements and the seasons, and Existence Itself.

The Journey is a relational journey. It is a journey of learning to relate consciously - of learning to relate from our own unique experience of the moment. It is a journey of learning to stay in touch with our actual, felt experience; of learning to express and communicate our unique experience - and of honouring the uniqueness of others. Which is why we need each other - the Tribe. We can't learn to relate alone.

This shared journey of opening is not only spiritual/existential, mental/intellectual, or psychological/emotional - it also inevitably affects the way we live physically. It draws us closer together, and it draws us back into life-and-death, into nature - into a richer, more textured way of life than the city life, or the media run life, or the mobile phone life. This leads me to believe in decentralisation, localisation, cultivating local community self-reliance, and so on - but I feel our most profound priority needs to be becoming 'non-biological siblings'. And from there, each Tribe, each 'non-biological extended family', will automatically express its creativity at the physical level, and make its contribution, according to its own interests and abilities.

If Conscious Tribes didn't impact our daily lifestyles, if they were purely spiritual exercises, or

intellectual enquiries, or solely concerned with therapy and healing, and self-development and growth-work - then they would be of little or no cultural consequence. They would fit neatly into the prevailing paradigm, on the sidelines, as private affairs, 'healing clubs' - repair shops for the inevitable stress, and psychological disturbances and breakdowns caused by the dominant culture. But Conscious Tribes are united, not only in their Sense of Belonging to the Great Mystery, and in deep intimacy with each other - but also in their purpose.

Conscious Tribes share a united, revolutionary purpose: to contribute to the co-creation of conscious communities - to participate in the co-creation of a new, conscious, close, connected culture - for themselves, for their children, and for the generations to come.

A PRACTICE

I believe these non-biological extended families, or Tribes, or clans - or whatever we might like to call them - are a very beautiful and necessary possibility. And the practice of Conscious Relating that I will be describing in this book is a shared-meditative practice that Tribes can use to activate and inspire their journey.

There is a single, solid recognition at the core of the Conscious Tribes Vision: that we each only have our own unique perception and experience of any given moment. And there is a single, central practice, or 'method', or 'technique', that I will be recommending as a starting point for forming a Conscious Tribe, and helping its journey get underway....

The Conscious Relating practice begins as a "meditation for two", and then becomes a meditation for the whole Tribe. It is an exquisite practice, involving not only silence, but also conversation. I believe it is an absolutely excellent way of forming and evolving a Tribe - because it's a Relational Meditation. It's not like Buddhist meditation, for example (which I don't mean to put down in any way) - which is individualistic. Ultimately it's not an individualistic path, of course, because it returns us to our oneness - but it's an individualistic way of meditating. You sit in meditation alone. Whereas Conscious Relating is about meditating together, and learning to relate to each other in presence and intimacy - from Essence to Essence.

Conscious Relating opens us to the Wonder of the Moment, and to Universal Love. And it is an experience we can "duplicate" - with anyone who's willing! We can practice it with friends, with our biological family, with people who live locally - and gradually form our Tribe. Then we can use it to support ourselves in living consciously - in planting, harvesting, cooking, eating and composting consciously; in making love consciously; in caring consciously for our children; in building buildings consciously; in celebrating consciously...





*The culture we now co-create
will be made
of us!*

3

Conscious Relating, Conscious Cultures

SEEDING A NEW CULTURE

How we relate - the quality of our relationships - the consciousness and closeness with which we relate - is the most crucial and important aspect we need to consider if we want to co-create a new, decentralised, community-based, conscious culture (or cultures).

Let's say we manage to set up alternative currencies everywhere, and barter systems, and learn to weave and cobble, and live with the land. Let's say we even, eventually, establish an infrastructure of inter-dependent, sovereign, self-sufficient local communities. Even then, if we are not relating consciously, all we will have done is have re-organised ourselves. We will not have become the seeds of a truly different culture. We will have set up better organised, perhaps ecologically organised, local communities - but we will not have prepared the ground, or the energy field, for our grandchildren, and their grandchildren, to inherit a radically new culture of awareness and loving respect and beauty.

Dominant, modern, global culture has detached itself from reality - from the the sacred, indefinable Mystery of which we are all part. It is therefore definably insane. And it detaches us from ourselves - from our innate self-worth, from our knowing of ourselves as Unique Expressions of the Great Mystery - creating a spiralling, desperate atmosphere of neuroses and obsessions, fear and conflict. It is not enough that we re-organise ecologically, or politically. We need to re-organise our psyches!

Of course this doesn't mean we abandon, for example, our alternative currencies. No! We have to set them up, and evolve them, and let them mature. But if we really "want in"; if we really want to BE the change - to be the conscious seeds of a new, conscious culture; if we're committed not only in word, but in action; if we accept we can never exist outside of humanity; if we choose to be part of an epochal, evolutionary, collective pilgrimage towards a new culture on Earth - and have any hope at all of arriving, then: the main issue to which we need to give our attention, and for which we need to take total responsibility, individually - is the way we relate.

The way we relate will BE the culture we co-create.

CONSCIOUS RELATING?

What do I mean by Conscious Relating? Firstly, let me say that when I talk of "relating" I mean, yes: how we relate to (or with) everything - the trees, the animals, the elements, things - but ABOVE ALL, I mean the way we relate to-and-with each other.

And what do I mean by relating "consciously"? Two things. Firstly, that we relate in the present, in the present moment. And secondly, that we relate in the present moment with a degree of awareness of our "dual nature" as both consciousness itself, undefinable in terms of time and space - and as crazy and magnificent individual characters, very much conditioned by time and place.

And when I say "a degree of awareness", I don't mean intellectual understanding. I mean degree of FELT perception, in the moment (of our dual nature).

So those are my definitions. Many of you will no doubt understand me - although you'd express the

same understandings in other vocabularies. Which is fine, of course. But whatever our vocabularies - what does Conscious Relating look like, in practice? I'm now going to paint a picture of it. Tomorrow I would no doubt paint a slightly different picture. I don't intend it to be definitive. It's a sketch, an outline - and a reminder, and a call...

Please bear in mind that we haven't been educated to relate like this; that actually - due to our lack of undogmatic, experiential/spiritual, intellectual, psychological and emotional education - by default, most of us, most of the time, tend to relate unconsciously. So a depiction of Conscious Relating might come across as forced, awkward, artificial or unrealistic.

But please also bear in mind that this example is a depiction of people who have been educated in "the invisible" (the mental, spiritual and psycho-emotional dimensions of our experience) - in ways that are not currently available on our school or university or workplace curriculums. They have made themselves the object, or the subject matter, of their education. And not just "once, on a weekend workshop"! To learn to Relate Consciously, consistently, in my opinion, for most of us, requires years of dedicated self-study.

FOR EXAMPLE

So let's take an example of a two such educated people who are living together - and both feeling cramped, both feeling they need space, and both hesitant to say so! A scenario many of us might recognise...

Firstly, we have to remember that people who Relate Consciously, as I have said, live in the present. And the present is a mystery. The present moment cannot be held conceptually. It can only be felt. And the more deeply it is felt, the more sacred and wondrous it seems. So whether the moment is full of happiness, or full of sadness - the perception of its sacred wonder unites such people in a deeper pleasure than its surface happiness or sadness. They live together in a recognisable, tangible, deeply-pleasurable energy field of awareness and appreciation.

I feel it is important to say this because, for such people, when the feelings of crampedness, and needing space, and the hesitancy to speak appear - they do so within this energy field of presentness and deep pleasure. The feelings stand out - like text that's been highlighted. Or like when one section of an orchestra suddenly becomes dominant...

And so these two people sit down together to acknowledge these feelings... They begin, in the same way that the Na'vi in Avatar say "I see you" - by acknowledging each other's being - each other's indefinable Essence. (At least that's how I understand that greeting!)

This brings us back to the other aspect of Conscious Relating: awareness of our "dual nature" - as both timeless and time-bound... Why - before addressing their feelings of confinement and their fear of self-expression - do these people pause to acknowledge their timeless (i.e. always-present) Essence? Because they're aware that the feelings they are about to share belong to their time-bound selves - to their unique personalities, with their unique self-images, with their unique constellations of memories, fears and dreams. The pause allows perspective.

And with perspective - with the expanded perspective of the our timeless selves - comes a shift of identification from outward personality towards inner Essence, and compassion for our own and each other's surface self - and a sense of ease...

And so they say "I see you". And they let themselves be seen. And they rest, together, for a while,

in the union of their Oneness.

I told you this is not our everyday way of relating! But, in my opinion, this is only because we are uneducated (bizarre as it might seem) in this most basic of all matters: how we relate to each other...

I am not going to now enter a detailed psychological analysis of what each person then shares. Suffice to say that - because of this State of Union - when each shares the thoughts and feelings of their conditioned personality, they are able to do so taking full responsibility for the subjectivity of their experience. They are disidentified and self-loving enough to be very simple: "I am observing these thoughts in my mind", they say. "I am observing these feelings in my heart". "I am observing these sensations in my body."

They don't say "You are an engulfing person", or even "I feel you engulf me, or constrict me, or constrain me". They say "I am feeling I can't move about as much as I need to, I am feeling I need to stretch and run about" (for example). And because each person is ONLY focussed on observing and sharing their OWN experience - each time they speak it's as if they peel off a layer, or turn a page... The truth that "I am afraid of sharing my need for space because I am afraid of hurting you" gives way, perhaps, to the deeper truth that "I am afraid of sharing my need for space because I am afraid of being alone" (for example), and so on...

This self-revelation, this peeling away of the layers of our conditioned personalities' thoughts, feelings and sensations - within the energy field of our unconditioned union - is exquisite! It is tender, it is passionate, it is painful and joyful, it is respectful, it is bold - it is love!

Yes, Conscious Relating evokes love. Universal Love. Not personal love, and not a non-personal love. It is not an 'impersonal' love - in the sense that we might talk of an 'impersonal atmosphere', when referring to a huge building without windows, or pictures on the walls. It is a Universal Love that transcends the personal, and yet links the personal and the personal. Conscious Relating opens us to a Universal Love because it reveals us to each other as different faces of ourselves.

And now that I have explained what I mean by Conscious Relating, I imagine, and I hope, you understand why I say that - if we want to co-create deep, intimate, beautiful, conscious communities and eventually new, conscious societies - we have to learn to sit with each other, and talk to each other, and interact with each other - in deep, intimate presence.

Does this mean we have to abandon our resistance to the advance of Technocracy and Transhumanism? Of course not! Does this mean we have to succumb to the the dehumanisation of humanity? No! Does it mean we have to forget about decentralisation, local community resilience, or respecting the other species, or 'nations', with whom we share this planet? Of course not! But, in my opinion, it does mean that - simultaneously, and perhaps most importantly - we need to self-educate in the beauty and delight of deep, intimate relating.

AREAS OF SELF-EDUCATION

So what might this self-education look like? I would say there are three areas we need to consider. Firstly, I would say we need mental clarity. And I will say more about this in chapter 10, "Clear Minds".

Secondly, I would say we need to deepen our felt-perception of the sacred and intelligent Mystery of the Moment - and of our sacred belonging - and of our own sacredness.

This means giving repeated, regular time to meditating, or Tai Chi, or Dance Therapy, or planting potatoes, or running through the forest, or communing with the muse of essay writing! Whatever habit, or habits, work for you!

We don't need any help in identifying with our individual personalities - with the characters we play all day long (and all night long), year after year. We are, essentially, fully identified there already! The side of our "dual nature" with which we are under-identified is our experience of ourselves as undefinable, free, and part of everything - the core, conscious, timeless beauty of ourselves. This 'spiritual', or 'existential' area of our self-education means making a specific commitment to ourselves as to how we will cultivate this innermost, still and blessed aspect of our being - and sticking to it!

So I'd say, if you haven't already done so already: choose your way(s) and commit to it/them!

And share your commitment(s) with trusted friends... And ask them about their own commitments. And ask each other how you can support each other. We need each other's support. We need each other. We need Tribe. It's tough to stick to an existential discipline, for years, by oneself. But when we travel alongside each other - having agreed to support each other, having agreed in words (not tacitly, or by some assumed telepathy!) - and made a pact to be a close, supportive, transformational Tribe - then the path becomes easier, more textured, more nourishing, more sustainable, and more fun.

Which brings us to the third and final area of our self-education for Conscious Relating: the psycho-emotional - the territory of our 'stuff'... Generally speaking, I don't believe we need to pick apart every emotional detail of our every interaction, but I do believe that a degree of psychological and emotional awareness is essential. We need to be able to name our emotions, and we need to be familiar with the habits of our psyches - in order to be able to make wise choices.

And if I recommend co-creating a Tribe for the spiritual area of our self-education - for the psycho-emotional area I'd say it's crucial. I would say that without others, emotional self-knowledge is almost impossible. We need (for example) to get angry with each other in order to see our anger, our fire, our power - and learn to direct it (rather than be directed by it), and engage it creatively. We need each other (for example) so that we can feel how we cling to each other, and come to recognise our vulnerability, our tenderness, our innocence - and learn to care for ourselves, and learn how to give ourselves without losing ourselves.

And I am aware that - just as we are not accustomed to Conscious Relating - nor are we accustomed to belonging to a Tribe. But this is the challenge! If we want a conscious culture, then we need to learn to relate consciously - and if we want to learn to relate consciously, then we need to form Conscious Tribes.

There are, of course, innumerable therapeutic techniques we could use in these second and third areas of our self-education - but The Practice of Conscious Relating, which I will describe and recommend in the next chapter, has been specifically designed to help us learn to relate consciously - both one to one, and all together, as a Tribe.

I have not written here about educating ourselves in how to thrive physically with decreasing dependence on the dominant culture - because that education, though also vital, is not a prerequisite for Conscious Relating. It is a consequence. Re-learning so many of the skills we have lost since the Industrial Revolution, when the machines took over - our self-education at the physical/material level - is obviously part of our overall curriculum - but it is something we turn to naturally as we relate more and more consciously to each other.

We then naturally ask ourselves how we relate consciously to planting, tending, harvesting and preserving our food; how we relate consciously to our surroundings and materials and tools as we build; how we warm and light our homes consciously; how we clothe ourselves consciously; how we travel consciously, and so on. We become aware that we are always relating. And it becomes natural - whatever we are doing - to want to relate consciously to it.

AS IF BY GRACE

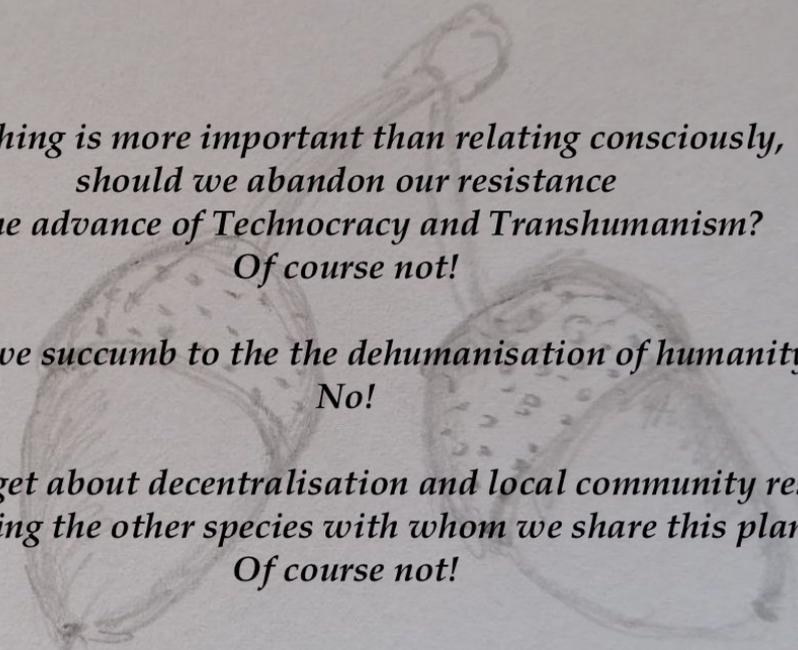
Educating ourselves so that we can Relate Consciously - educating ourselves intellectually, existentially, and psycho-emotionally - takes time. There's no quick fix. We have been (in my opinion) brutally conditioned by a superficial, unconscious and violent culture - and to de-condition, or re-condition ourselves, in sacred, conscious, respectful, intimate relating won't happen overnight. There is a journey to be undertaken - a journey, as I have said, best undertaken together.

Sometimes, I have found - in my own experience, and that of others - that we commit consistently to our self education, and pursue it enthusiastically - but after some years come to feel it is having little effect. "I still have very little dual-identification" we say to ourselves, despondently, "I still relate almost completely identified with my body-mind-personality-character - almost completely unconsciously!"

And yet, I have also found that sometimes, perhaps when we are least expecting it - in the middle of a conversation with a friend, perhaps - timelessness and sacredness envelope us, and we find we are able to laugh at our pretensions and ambitions from a larger perspective, and forgive each other and ourselves - and share a Universal Love. And these moments seem to come - not by any effort of our own - but as if by grace.

My own feeling is that our daily commitments prepare us. They turn us into the fertile soil for the seed of grace. The years pass, we stay strong in our commitment to consciousness and honesty and authenticity, and somehow we find that we are no longer principally-identified with our individual personalities, that, as if by grace, we have become "re-identified" - principally identified beyond our personalities, and able to relate to everyone and everything as the embodiments of The Sacred Mystery we all already are.

*



*If nothing is more important than relating consciously,
should we abandon our resistance
to the advance of Technocracy and Transhumanism?
Of course not!*

*Should we succumb to the the dehumanisation of humanity?
No!*

*Should we forget about decentralisation and local community resilience,
or respecting the other species with whom we share this planet?
Of course not!*

4

Love And Revolution

UNSUCCESSFUL REVOLUTION

All revolutionaries aim to overthrow what they see as oppression and abuse, and install a regime they believe is more humane, more caring - a regime that promises respect, and fairness.

Ultimately - whatever the surface 'ism' of a particular revolution - whether Russian (1917), Chinese (1911), French (1789 - 1799), American (1775 - 1783), Cuban (1953 - 1959), or Irani (1979) - in their hearts, all revolutionaries believe they are on the side of Goodness. What does that mean? In the last analysis, what it comes down to is that they believe they are on the side of Universal Love.

On this basis we can say that no revolution in human history has ever been successful - in as much as no revolution has ever successfully established the Reign of Universal Love on Earth. Why not? Because until now, no set of revolutionaries has ever been adequately trained in sustaining their capacity for Universal Love. As yet, no set of revolutionaries has adequately prepared their consciousness for such an epic endeavour.

Until now, no set of revolutionaries has even contemplated the possibility that the longterm success of the new regime they seek to install will depend entirely on the degree to which they themselves, and people in general, having educated themselves not only psycho-emotionally, but energetically or spiritually or existentially - and have therefore become able to consistently choose Universal Love.

IDEALISTIC TWODDLE

To those among us who have little or no experience of the transformation of their own psyche and awareness, these words might sound (at best) like idealistic, utopian ramblings, or (at worst) like absurd spiritual-lunacy. Even those of us who HAVE experienced personal transformation, or healing, or awakening of some sort might wonder whether political revolutions and the evolution of consciousness are in any way compatible.

My friends - my brothers and sisters, or non-binary siblings, or however you might like to think of yourself: IT IS ONLY A QUESTION OF EDUCATION. However: it is not an education that the superficial, fanatically-materialistic, numb and hard-hearted, violent mainstream world culture will offer us. Of course it won't. Why would it feed its own overthrow?!

However, nurturing the Consciousness that enables us to Choose Universal Love is our primary revolutionary act. Cultivating the capacity to recognise the moment-to-moment existential choice between defending and promoting our own little life project, or acting on behalf of the whole - and cultivating the capacity to act on that choice - needs to become our daily, self-developmental, revolutionary commitment.

And this is not a private matter. Sociologists talk about "the privatisation of spirituality" - the removal of overtly spiritual/existential concerns from the market place and from the political arena. "Meditate in private, if you like" is the message, "but keep it to yourself. And please don't bring it to the office!"

NO! We can't cultivate our capacity for consciousness and Universal Love alone. We need each other. We need communities. And I say 'communities' and not 'support groups', because support groups can be easily, neatly bolted onto the A.I.-infatuated, techno-intoxicated, production-and-progress-obsessed, centralisation and CCTV and control-obsessed, global mainstream. "Sure, do a little healing on the side! Why not?! What harm can it do?! Just don't be late for work tomorrow!" NO! There are circumstances that favour the evolution of consciousness, and circumstances that thwart it....

Local community. Deep relationships. Responsibility for our locality. Contact with nature - with the trees, the animals, the insects and birds... with the weather, with the waxing and waning moons, with the equinoxes and solstices. Time out, down time, holy-days. Celebration, appreciation, gratitude. Local, poison-free food. Poison-free water. Creativity and contribution (as against wage slavery). All of these things favour the evolution and transformation of consciousness - and asphalt, street lights, traffic noise, plastic food, work-work-work, and junk, escapist entertainment don't.

So here is a second revolutionary commitment: to adjust our lifestyles in ways that support and enhance our primary revolutionary commitment: the development of our Capacity to Choose Universal Love.

UNIVERSAL LOVE

So what is Universal Love? I believe we all already know. We know what Bob Marley meant when he sung "one love, one heart - let's get together and feel all right". We all know what it means when, in a huge stadium or auditorium, thousands upon thousands of people wave a light (their own tiny light) - and sway together, in one great oneness. We know Universal Love. What we don't know is that it is easily accessible, or how to access it - or that it is the unharnessed, most radical revolutionary energy on Earth.

Universal Love is not romantic love. It is not focussed or fixated on one particular person. You don't even have to like someone to love them - universally! Universal Love is not personal. It goes beyond the person and the personality... It is the love that arises when we know ourselves as consciousness - when we know ourselves to be a consistent, spacious energy that exists beyond our ever-changing personalities. It is the love that arises when - knowing ourselves to be consciousness - we look into another's eyes, and see ourselves. Somebody else's economic class, their educational background, their race, their sex, their age - everything about them might be different from us... But we look into their eyes and feel their pain, their struggles, their need to be understood, their need to be loved, their longings, their beauty - and we know that, in essence, we're just the same.

Consciousness, self-knowledge - the felt-knowledge that we are more than our familiar, everyday, culturally-conditioned identities - is the prerequisite for Universal Love. Not for glimpsing it, but for the ability to sustain it - and to choose it again and again. So our self-educational curriculum needs to be: to learn the difference between The Consciousness We Are and our Conditioned Selves, to learn to discriminate our Conscious Behaviour from the behaviour of our Conditioned Selves - and to strengthen our ability to pull our identification out of our Conditioned Selves, and return it to the arms of consciousness.

This might sound mystical, far off, unattainable - BUT IT IS NOT. It is just a question of training. And, actually, results come quick. In fact, I am now going to recommend a practice, a training technique that will (a) help you know yourself as consciousness, and (b) offer you a powerful experience of Universal Love. If you can do this practice every day - fantastic. Just do it as often as you can. It is deeply pleasurable. But you will need someone to do it with...

This practice, which I call 'Conscious Relating', will almost certainly generate a powerful, profound, intimate, erotic experience of Universal Love... Make sure you don't confuse this with romantic love. You are not loving your practice partner unconditionally because they are "the one". You can experience Universal Love with anyone - with everyone! Practices like Conscious Relating, if you take them seriously, can revolutionise your perception, your relationships, your reality - your life! Which is why they are the groundwork for The First Successful Revolution!

THE PRACTICE OF CONSCIOUS RELATING

I have found four different ways of doing the Conscious Relating Practice - which I'll describe in the coming chapters. This is how you do the first one, the basic one...

You'll need half an hour, or forty five minutes. You'll need peace and quiet. And you'll need to not be interrupted. So select a practice partner, and a time when you can both put everything else aside. And try it! The practice has three main stages...

Stage 1, approx. 10 mins., "Uniqueness and Belonging": Sit in front of each other, and both close your eyes. Go in. Become aware of your breath. Release your exhalations throughout your body - gently, tenderly. Become exclusively aware of your own body and breath. Let your mind rumble on, if it wants to - but give your attention to your own body and breath.

Feel your body, feel your breath - and feel your Uniqueness. Feel your own presence, exactly where you are. Feel the air around your body. Have a sense of yourself in this moment - and of your unique journey through life... There is nobody else exactly like you. There never has been, and never will be. You are Unique - incomparable, irrepeatable - like every other creature: every tree, every cat, every rabbit, every fish, every rock, every star... Release your exhalations gently through your whole body - honouring yourself as a Unique Expression of the Totality to which we all belong.

Now begin to be aware of your Uniqueness within this larger Belonging - and alternate your exhalations like this: release one or two exhalations through your whole body, then one or two exhalations out into the air around your body, out into the infinite space that surrounds us all, out into the Universe of which we are all part - and in that sense, to which we all Belong.

Feel your Belonging. You are a part of everything. Inseparably. Perhaps remember the other species with whom we share this planet. Other species who eat and mate, as we do. And feel your Belonging. Perhaps remember how the other animals, and insects and birds and fish also wake and sleep, with the day and with the night - as we do. And feel your Belonging. Perhaps feel how you depend upon the air around you for your life. Feel the air inside you. And feel your Belonging. Perhaps feel how you depend on the water you drink to stay alive. Remember the rivers and lakes and the rain. And feel your Belonging. Perhaps remember how, in this moment, you are living and dying as have, and as will, countless generations before and after you. And feel your Belonging. Feel your belonging more and more deeply with every breath, with every exhalation. You are part of everything. We all are! Let go into your Belonging. Let life hold you. Let yourself, your Unique Self, be held. Be receptive. Receive.

Alternate your exhalations like this: release one or two exhalations through your whole body, then one or two exhalations out into the Universe - into that of which we are all part, and in that sense - to which we all Belong. "Breath to Self, Breath to the Universe".

Stage 2, approx. 10 mins., "Connection and Equilibrium": Open your eyes slowly and gently, and come to hold a soft gaze with each other. Relax your eye muscles. See and let yourself be-seen. But don't lose touch with your body or breath, or your sense of yourself, or your Belonging. The presence of "other" is impactful - but stay as connected with yourself as you were while your eyes were closed.

Now start to release your exhalations differently... Release them alternately (i) throughout your own body, and then (ii) out towards your practice partner. When you release your exhalation through your own body, FEEL your own presence. When you release your exhalation towards your practice partner, FEEL their presence. Be equally aware of yourself and of them. "Breath to Self, Breath to Other".

If more than half of your attention is on yourself - extend your feeling towards your practice partner. Feel them more deeply. If more than half of your attention is on your practice partner, retract it - feel your own presence more deeply. In this way, in silence, remaining in your Uniqueness and Belonging, stay both close to your own body and breath, and stay connected with each other. Balance your energies - so that you can feel own presence and that of your practice partner equally, simultaneously. This "balancing up" of your energies is a moment-to-moment meditation. Remain alert.

Sometimes, in order to balance your energies, and deepen your awareness of both "self and other", it can help to use thought - like this: as you exhale down through your own body, think "I respect myself", and then as you exhale out towards your practice partner, think "and I respect you" (feeling your words, and meaning them, as you think them). Or you might think: "I accept myself, I accept you." "I struggle and suffer sometimes, and I sense you have suffered your own struggles too." "Sometimes I feel alone, hurt, afraid - and I sense you do too." "I wish myself well. I wish you well too." "May I be fully myself, and may you be fully yourself too." These are just suggestions. Trust what comes...

You will know when you are resting in Equilibrium (feeling both "self and other"), within the energy field of Belonging (feeling tenderly held by Life), because the atmosphere between you, and around you, will transform. The space will feel magical and sacred. Everything will seem more beautiful, more luminous... You will be in union with each other, and with the world around you.

Keep returning to your breath whenever a sensation or feeling or thought has kidnapped your attention. And as you release your exhalations through your own body, let yourself be impacted by your practice partner. Don't defend or protect yourself in any way. Let yourself be-seen. Hide nothing. Be receptive. Feel what it feels like, in that moment, to be-seen. Then when you release your exhalation out towards your practice partner (gently, without pushing it): see! Let yourself see them, truly see them - as the Unique Expressions of the Great Mystery that they are. Don't presume to "know them". Appreciate THAT Unique Face of the Tao. Wonder at it. Love it. Be astounded by it.

As you release "breath to self" let yourself be-seen, be-loved and be-blessed. As you release "breath to other" - see, love and bless!

Stage 3, approx. 10 mins., "Expression": For approx. 5 minutes each, one at a time, now speak your present-time experience. In other words: one person speaks and the other listens, for five minutes - and then the other person speaks for five minutes, while the one who just spoke now listens. (It is not a conversation.) Both continue to alternate "breath to self, breath to other". They continue to hold a soft gaze. The listener holds the space - breathing consciously, fully attentive, staying close. The speaker shares their present-time experience at the physical, emotional, mental and

energetic/spiritual/existential levels, like this:

"I am noticing such and such a sensation in my body." "I am noticing such and such a feeling arise in me." "I am noticing such and such a thought pass through my mind." "I am noticing such and such an energetic shift in the field around us." In other words, we don't speak in the way we normally speak. We don't speak from our habitual identification with our personalities - saying, for example "I'm happy, or I think this practice is important". No. We say "right now I am noticing this feeling, or noticing this thought". We speak from our Belonging, as the Unique Conscious Beings we are - and we describe the experiences of our Conditioned Self. We share the physical, emotional, mental and energetic experiences of the personalities with which we are usually identified - while rested together in Loving Union with each other, in the Bliss of our Belonging.

After the first person has spoken both close your eyes, and take a few breaths, and let go of all that was said and heard. Then open your eyes again, and reconnect - before the second person speaks. The formal part of practice of Conscious Relating ends when both have spoken. Thank each other. Embrace. And then give yourselves a little informal time to debrief - to share insights and realisations. Take care. You will probably both be very open. Speak subjectively - don't tell the other "tough truths" about themselves. When you speak your unique, subjective experience, present it as neither more nor less than what it is: your unique, subjective experience. Be kind. And remember: this was a practice. A practice for what? A practice for everyday life. Don't immediately switch back into your habitual way of being. Let the practice filter through...

The Practice of Conscious Relating is extremely powerful. If you do it regularly it will impact every aspect of your life because, of course - everything involves relating. I invite you to do it - to get to know it, and to make it your own... Seek out practice partners. Do the practice repeatedly. Suggest to everyone that they agree to meet to do the practice with THEIR friends. This is the simplest, the deepest, and the most natural and flowing way to form a Conscious Tribe.

COMMUNITY AND TRIBE

In conclusion - most, if not all of history's revolutions have been well intended - lovingly intended, even - but revolutionaries have been ill-equipped to establish regimes that perpetuated their most profound and heartfelt intentions.

Today, in my opinion, we are faced with a global situation that calls for a global revolution. Our leaders are utterly hypocritical - preaching greenness while genetically modifying our food and spraying our skies; and preaching freedom and equality while continuously tightening the grip of centralised, absolute, impersonal, digital control. We are being conveyed without consultation into a technocratic, transhuman, smart-city dystopia...

But are we the revolutionaries we need? Even if, tomorrow, the armed forces of the world all suddenly put down their guns and bombs, and turned and said "enough!" - would WE be able to set up and maintain a culture imbued with our most profound, heartfelt intentions? Would we be able to co-create a culture imbued with Universal Love? No! Because we ourselves don't live in Universal Love.

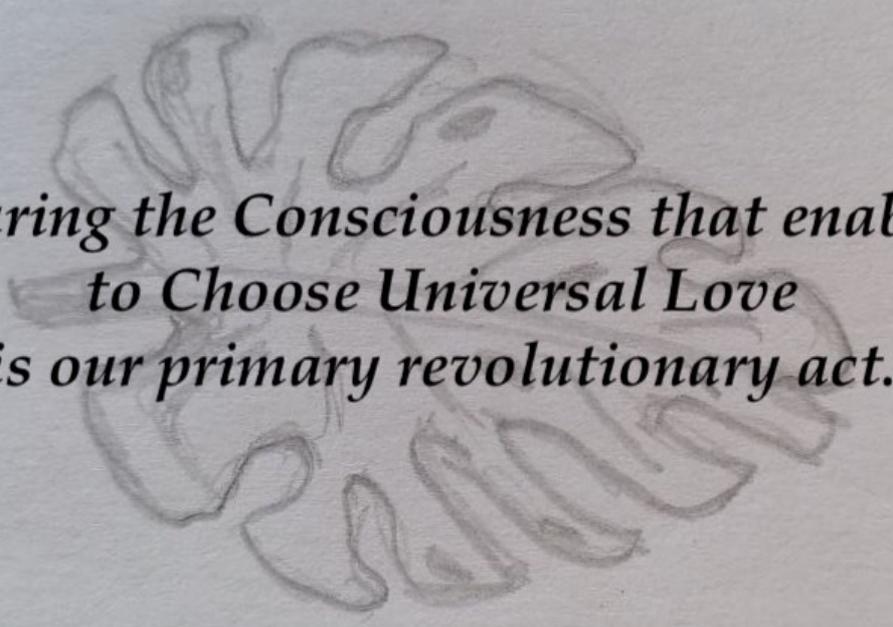
The roots of our revolution need to be in self-education. And as I have said, this doesn't mean we sit around in support groups, living the lifestyles with which we are familiar. Absolutely not! The need to self-educate is not an excuse for inaction. As well as self-educating, simultaneously, we need to mobilise ourselves in the direction of decentralisation, of local community, of letting go of our dependency on the dominant culture, of self-sufficiency, of re-skilling and, perhaps above all, of

re-embedding ourselves in the natural world - because all of this creates the optimum environment for learning to live in Universal Love.

Finally, I want to repeat a distinction I often make between Community and Tribe. A local community might consist of several thousand people. Perhaps more. And since Presentness and Universal Love are cultivated in intimacy, and since, obviously, it's impossible to be intimate with that many people - within our communities we need Tribes. We need Tribes - groups of ten, twenty or thirty people who know each other well, who are close, who meet regularly, who help each other and rely on each other, and who support each other in the cultivation of Universal Love.

BUT - such Tribes don't exist! They are, I believe, the social structure we need to invent, if we want to learn to live, increasingly consistently, together, in Universal Love. We need to invent them: to conceive them and form them, and name them and care for them. We need to invent Conscious Tribes - Tribes of people dedicated to their own and each other's self-education, and to the education (not the 'schooling') of their children and grandchildren... Tribes devoted to consciousness, to conscious daily living and conscious relating - to learning to live together in Universal Love - to becoming the revolutionaries capable of the First Successful Revolution!

*



*Nurturing the Consciousness that enables us
to Choose Universal Love
is our primary revolutionary act.*

5

The Practice of Conscious Relating (between two people)

GUIDE SHEETS

As I said in the last chapter, I have found four ways of doing the Practice of Conscious Relating (so far!) - two with a practice partner, and two as a group. In this chapter I'll outline the two ways of doing the practice with a partner, and in the next chapter the two ways of practicing as a group, or Tribe.

This chapter and the next one are intended as Guide Sheets that you can use to help you engage more and more deeply with the practice. They are also available as separate, stand-alone Guide Sheets, which you can download for free (see the last chapter for details).

Another resource I would recommend downloading is one of the Guided Conscious Relating Audios. These guide you through the practice. They remind you of the focus of each part of the practice, hold the timings for you, and so on. (Again, see the last chapter for details).

INTRODUCTION

So let's begin with Conscious Relating between two people - with a Conscious Relating "practice partner". As I said, I am going to outline two ways of doing this. Both ways have three parts, and each part lasts about 10 minutes).

In both ways the first and second parts are the same. What changes is the third part. There are two ways of doing the third part.

Get comfortable. Make sure you won't be interrupted. (Turn your mobile phones off!) And sit in front of each other at a distance that feels intimate, but not merged.

The practice of Conscious Relating between two people goes like this:

PART 1. 'BELONGING AND UNIQUENESS'

Sitting in front of each other, eyes closed, in silence - each alternates their exhalations like this: "I release an exhalation tenderly through my whole body, and my sense of self - and then I release an exhalation tenderly out into the air that surrounds me - into the Universe, into God or the Goddess, into the Totality, the Tao, the Great Mystery..." Both practice partners gradually establish themselves as unique faces, or unique expressions, of that to which we all Belong. "Breath to self, breath to the Tao."

You might find it works better for you to release two exhalations to yourself, and then two to the Tao - or three to yourself, and then three to the Tao. Each person takes responsibility for situating themselves - at their own pace - in their Belonging and their Uniqueness. (This flexibility applies to the whole practice.)

Gradually the two ways of breathing become one, in other words - you come to feel you're exhaling through your own body, and into the Universe at the same time.

PART 2. 'CONNECTION AND EQUILIBRIUM'

In silence, both open their eyes - and connect gently with each other. Maintain a soft, connected gaze.

(a) At the beginning (for about a minute) maintain the same way of breathing as during the first part of the practice. This helps us both be as stable "in our Belonging and Uniqueness" now, in relation to another person, as we were in the first part with our eyes closed, when our attention was inwards.

(b) Now we change the way we breathe. The first exhalation doesn't change. It's still "I exhale tenderly throughout my body, and my sense of myself - within The Great Oneness." But it now alternates with an exhalation tenderly released (not into the Universe, but) towards the other. Without effort, naturally, both start to nurture an energetic balance in the relationship - bringing 50% of their attention to themselves, and 50% to the other.

It can help to open up to thoughts/feelings such as "I respect myself, I respect you", "I have suffered, and I imagine you have suffered too", "I have my own unique path through life, and you have yours", "I want the best for me, I want the best for you", etc...

(c) Little by little, with the exhalation we offer to ourselves, we open to receiving. We let ourselves be impacted by 'other'. We do not defend ourselves. We let ourselves be energetically naked in front of the other. And with the exhalation that we release (without forcing it) towards the other, we bless them with our acceptance, and with our appreciation of their uniqueness. We receive, we give. We receive, we give. With the exhalation that I release through my own body, I receive: I let myself be-seen, I let myself be-blessed, I let myself be-loved. And with the exhalation that I release towards the other, I give: I see, I recognise their uniqueness, I see 'a unique face of God' before me - and I let blessing and love pass through me, towards my practice partner.

If we don't feel respected, if, for example, we feel judged or aggressed by the other person - we let ourselves be impacted anyway. We observe what it feels like to be impacted in that way. And if we don't feel love or respect for the other person, if, for example, we feel contempt or envy or rejection, we just do the same - we continue observing. We observe ourselves, and the act of self-observation naturally evolves whatever it is that we're observing. .

And as with any meditation, "let go and return to the breath"... If you find yourself involved, for example, in self-judgment, or judging the other - let go of the mind without opposing it - and simply return to feeling your breath. If you find yourself overwhelmed by fear, or desire, or any other emotion - "let go and return to the breath". If you find yourself fascinated by subtle changes in the other's face, or by a sudden luminosity of your surroundings - let go and breathe consciously again. And through the breath, become aware of yourself, again and again, as the Unique Being that you are, present in the moment, in your Belonging, Part of the Great Mystery, breathing, open - in Conscious Relationship with another - within a Field of Love neither sentimental nor romantic, but Universal.

PART 3. (FIRST WAY) 'EXPRESSION'

Continuing with the same way of breathing ("breath to self, breath to other"), and maintaining a soft

gaze - one person speaks, the other listens (for more or less 5 minutes each). The person who speaks "self-reveals" - they share their actual experience of the moment, nothing more... They share their physical, or emotional, or mental, or energetic experience from "the witness" - like this: "I'm observing this particular sensation in my body, I'm observing a certain emotion pass through my heart, or thought pass through my mind, I'm observing such-and-such a change in my energetic experience..." The person who listens holds the space (of Belonging and Uniqueness, and of Connection and Equilibrium).

PART 3. (SECOND WAY) 'CONVERSATION'

When you already have some experience of the third part as 'Expression', you can do it as 'Conversation'. I see this second way of doing the practice as bridging the first way with everyday life - as a step towards integrating Conscious Relating into our everyday lives...

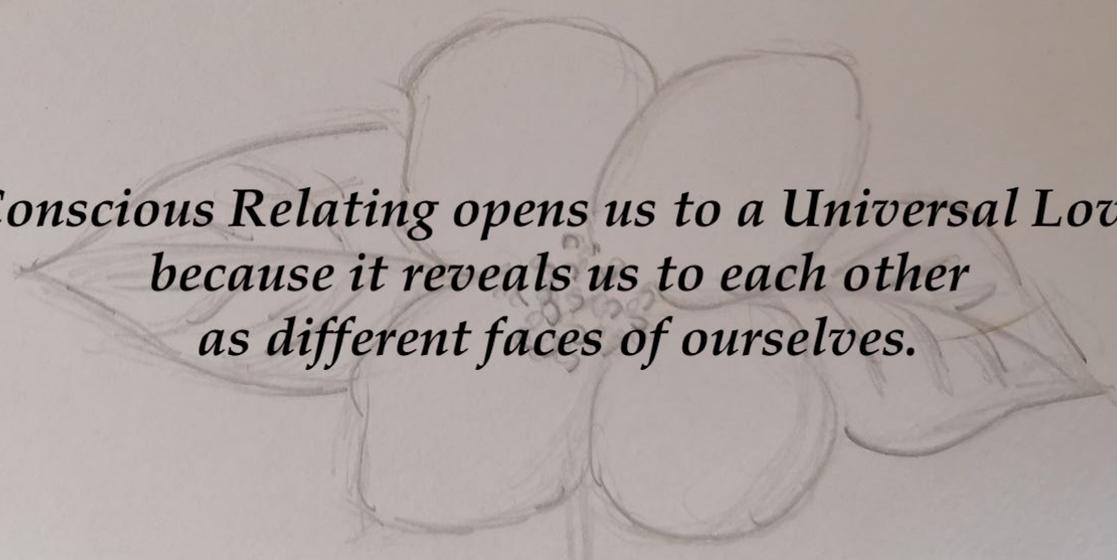
Continuing with the same way of breathing, and maintaining a soft gaze - either person can speak whenever they like, but whatever they say, they both remain aware that everything they say is a self-revelation, a sharing of their own unique experience - a revelation of their uniqueness. So there is a conversation, but without conflict - because no one is opposing anyone. Both are self-observing and sharing their self-observations. Each shares what they actually experience - revealing their unique beauty and craziness! - within an energy field (held by them both, now) of Belonging, Presence, Connection, Respect - and a Love at once Personal and Universal.

ENDING

When you've completed the practice, find a way to end. You might want to embrace. You might want to thank each other for the time spent together in such deep and conscious closeness.

And after ending, you might want to debrief...





*Conscious Relating opens us to a Universal Love
because it reveals us to each other
as different faces of ourselves.*

6

The Practice of Conscious Relating (as a Tribe)

INTRODUCTION

As I said, I have found four ways (so far) of doing the Practice of Conscious Relating - two with a partner, and two as a group. In the last chapter I outlined the two ways with a partner. In this chapter I'll outline the two ways of doing the practice as a group.

And again - these two chapters are intended as independent Guide Sheets that you can download and use to support you in the practice. I also recommend downloading the Guided Conscious Relating Audios. (See the last chapter for details.)

So let's go through the two ways of doing the practice of Conscious Relating as a Tribe. Both ways have three parts. In both ways the first and second parts are the same. What changes is the third part. There are two ways of doing the third part.

I recommend sitting in a circle. Get comfortable. Make sure you won't be interrupted. (Turn your mobile phones off!) And sit as close to each other as you can without feeling you are sacrificing your personal space.

The practice of Conscious Relating as a Tribe goes like this:

PART 1. 'BELONGING AND UNIQUENESS' (approx. 10 minutos)

Sitting in circle, eyes closed, in silence - everyone alternates their exhalations like this: "I release an exhalation tenderly through my whole body, and my sense of self - and then I release an exhalation tenderly out into the air that surrounds me - into the Universe, into God or the Goddess, into the Totality, the Tao, the Great Mystery..." Everyone gradually establishes themselves as a unique face, or unique expression, of that to which we all Belong. "Breath to self, breath to the Tao."

You might find it works better for you to release two exhalations to yourself, and then two to the Tao - or three to yourself, and then three to the Tao. Each person takes responsibility for situating themselves - at their own pace - in their Belonging and their Uniqueness. (This flexibility applies to the whole practice.)

Gradually the two ways of breathing become one, in other words - you come to feel you're exhaling through your own body, and into the Universe at the same time.

PART 2. 'CONNECTION AND EQUILIBRIUM' (approx. 10 minutos)

In silence, everyone opens their eyes - and beholds the Tribe, gently. Don't look at anyone in particular. Be tenderly conscious of the whole Tribe.

(a) At the beginning (for about a minute) maintain the same way of breathing as during the first part of the practice. This helps us all be as stable "in our Belonging and Uniqueness" now, in relation to the Tribe, as we were in the first part with our eyes closed, when we our attention was inwards.

(b) Now we change the way we breathe. The first exhalation doesn't change. It's still "I exhale tenderly throughout my body, and my sense of myself - within The Great Oneness." But it now alternates with an exhalation tenderly released (not into the Universe, but) into the Tribe. Without hurrying, naturally, everyone nurtures a sense of energetic balance in their relating - offering 50% of their attention to themselves, and 50% to the Tribe.

It can help to open up to thoughts/feelings such as "I respect myself, I respect you all", "I have suffered, and I imagine you have all suffered too", "I have my own unique path through life, and you all have your own", "I want the best for me, I want the best for you all", etc...

(c) Little by little, with the exhalation we offer to ourselves, we open ourselves to receive. We let ourselves be impacted by everyone present. We do not defend ourselves. We let ourselves be energetically naked in front of the Tribe. And with the exhalation that we release (without 'pushing' it) towards the Tribe, we bless everyone with our acceptance, and with our appreciation of their sacred uniqueness. We receive, we give. We receive, we give. With the exhalation that I release through my own body, I receive: I let myself be-seen, I let myself be-blessed, I let myself be-loved. And with the exhalation that I release towards the Tribe, I give: I see, I recognise everyone's uniqueness, I see everyone as 'a unique face of God' - and I let blessing and love pass through me, towards everyone.

If we don't feel respected, if, for example, we feel judged or aggressed by the others - we let ourselves be impacted anyway. We observe what it feels like to be impacted in that way. And if we don't feel love or respect for the others, if, for example, we feel contempt or envy or rejection, we just do the same - we continue observing. We observe ourselves, and the act of self-observation naturally evolves whatever it is that we're observing. .

And as with any meditation, "let go and return to the breath": if you find yourself involved, for example, in self-judgment, or judging the other - let go of the mind without opposing it - and simply return to feeling your breath. If you find yourself overwhelmed by fear, or desire, or any other emotion - "let go and return to the breath". If you find yourself fascinated by subtle changes in the other's face, or by the sudden luminosity of your surroundings - let go and breathe consciously again. And by breathing, become present again - as the unique being you are, within your Belonging to Everything, in respectful and loving relationship with Everyone.

PART 3. (FIRST WAY) 'EXPRESSION' (30-90mins depending, in part, on the size of the Tribe)

Continuing with the same way of breathing ("breath to self, breath to the others") - speak one by one, going around the circle. But speak briefly - just one or two sentences. And every time someone speaks they "self-reveal" - they share their actual experience of the moment, nothing more... They share their physical, or emotional, or mental, or energetic experience from "the witness" - like this: "I observe a certain sensation in my body, I observe a certain emotion passing through my heart, or thought passing through my mind, I observe such-and-such a change in my energetic experience..." It's not a conversation. What someone shares may or may not be related to what the previous person shared. Each person shares their own unique experiencing.

I'd recommend that everyone shares, at least once... And the Tribe, united, listens "actively", by which I mean - gently using their breath and presence to hold a space, or energy field, of Belonging and Uniqueness, Connection and Equilibrium.

PART 3. (SECOND WAY) 'CONVERSATION' (30-90mins depending, in part, on the size of the Tribe)

When the Tribe already has some experience of the third part as 'Expression', it can do this part of the practice as 'Conversation'. I see this way of doing the practice as bridging the first way with everyday life - as a step towards integrating Conscious Relating into our everyday lives.

Continuing with the same way of breathing - anyone can speak whenever they like, about whatever they want - but whatever they say, they all remain aware that everything they say is a self-revelation, a sharing of their own unique experience - a revelation of their uniqueness. So there is a conversation, but without conflict - because no one is opposing anyone. Everyone is self-observing and sharing their self-observations. Everyone shares themselves - revealing their unique beauty and craziness - within a tribal energy field of Belonging, Presence, Connection, Respect - and a Love at once Personal and Universal.

Again, I'd recommend that everyone speak at least once - so that nobody becomes a spectator. And if a subject of conversation is 'hot', or tense, or difficult in some way - I'd recommend a short silence between sharings.

And just like when you do the practice with a partner, when you've completed the third part, find a way to end. You might want to all make the "namaste" gesture, putting the palms of your hands together, for example. Find a way of thanking each other for the time spent together in such deep and conscious closeness. And after ending you might want to debrief..



*If we want a conscious culture,
we have to learn to relate consciously.*

*But we can't learn to relate consciously
by ourselves!*

*Nor is it something we learn in a flash
on a weekend workshop.*

*We need to form Tribes that are committed
to a shared journey of transformation.*

Tribe Conversations

SHARED UNDERSTANDINGS

Sacred, present, united and intimate Tribe Conversations are the wonderful, mature fruit that evolves out of practicing Conscious Relating together.

But Conscious Relating rests on various, implicit understandings. In this chapter I want to make some of them explicit - so that, as we form our Tribes, we all know what we're getting into. And so that our unity is explicit - and there are no clashes of worldviews later on, down the line...

Whether our Tribe Conversation is spontaneous, a time of measured sharings (10 minutes each, for example), or dedicated to a specific topic - it is where our Unity will be tested! To share deeply - with vulnerability, yet boldly; nakedly, in trust - is not something we learn at school. Of course, some people will join a Conscious Tribe having practiced Conscious Relating, in their own way, for years - in therapy perhaps, or on self-development weekends. For others it will be unfamiliar territory. That's not a problem. We can have different levels of experience. But to synchronise, to be truly traveling together - for our Unity to become explicit and powerful - we need a shared understanding of what it means to Relate Consciously, to relate in Unity and non-romantic Love.

At demonstrations people chant "freedom! freedom! freedom!" And we all feel resonant. But what does each of us envision as they chant? Even if (unlikely as it is) we all understand 'freedom' in the same way - we certainly don't share a detailed understanding of what it means to RELATE in Freedom, or Oneness, or Love.

If, as we walked - beneath our banners declaring our Sovereignty, and Innate Rights, and reminding Governments of their Mandate to Serve, not Enslave - if, as we walked, Some Great God were to suddenly intervene and say "there you are - it's yours - you've got your freedom!" - we haven't got the Shared Understanding to be able to live it!

I am stressing this because, in my experience, if we do not have clear, detailed, shared understandings... well, obviously - we have different understandings. And sooner or later, these different understandings begin to pull in different directions. And ultimately, they can pull the Conscious Tribe apart. (This doesn't mean we can't have differences, it means we need a shared way of looking at them, and being-with them.)

So in this chapter I want to underline what I consider to be the most important aspects of a Conscious Conversation - understandings that I hope will put some flesh on the bare bones of words like 'freedom' - so that we can not only Recognise our Unity, but Relate in Unity; and so that we can not only defend our freedom for an afternoon on a march, but be able to Live In It - and pass on that experience to our children, and grandchildren...

So, here is my list... When we gather as a Tribe, and sit in circle, and practice Conscious Relating as a Tribe Conversation, I am especially aware of:

1. speaking My Own Experience
2. speaking in Equality
3. speaking in Emotional Connection
4. speaking from Self Love
5. listening with the Heart

ALL I EVER HAVE IS MY OWN EXPERIENCE

The first understanding of Conscious Relating I want to underline is that we only speak Our Own Experience. Why? This understanding is based on the perception that, ultimately, all we ever have is Our Own Experience - that I will never have your experience of this moment, or of reality - and you will never have mine. We might lie together at night - but I will have my dreams, and you will have yours. We might even merge while making love - but even then, I will have my experience of merging, and you will have yours.

And if I only ever have My Own Experience, integrity demands I speak in the first person singular; that I should make no pretence to objectivity. I am a point on the circumference of the circle, like everyone else. I have my unique perspective, like everyone else. But to speak in this awareness requires practice. We speak objectively, habitually. "It is a beautiful day!" we say. Is it? Or is it a beautiful day - for us. Is it, perhaps, a miserable day - for someone else?

And to only speak My Own Experience is not only to speak subjectively. It is to speak my actual experience. "Such-and-such a person is arrogant" we say (for example). OK. But that is our judgement; or at best, our assessment. It is not Our Actual Experience. What we ACTUALLY EXPERIENCED when we were in-the-presence of the person we're judging as arrogant, is quite another matter. Perhaps we felt small. Perhaps we felt inferior. Perhaps we felt angry. THAT was Our Actual Experience - and that is what we share. And there is a world of difference between "you are arrogant", and "when I'm in front of you, I feel small"!

"You are arrogant" is our habitual, judgmental way of speaking - and, obviously, it provokes conflict. "I feel small when I am in your presence" on the other hand, is an accurate articulation of our Actual Experience, and elicits empathy and understanding. And in letting ourselves be-seen in our Actual Experience, in our humanity, in our 'imperfection' - we let ourselves Be-Loved.

Speaking Our Own Experience is honest, real, and non-conflictive. It returns us to an appropriate humility, and Lets Love In.

YOU ARE AS IMPORTANT TO YOURSELF, AS I AM TO ME

Next: we speak in equality. This might sound obvious, and theoretically, for many people, if not most, it is. But in practice (as you will no doubt have noticed!) - just as we don't tend to only speak Our Own Actual Experience - we do not tend to speak in full acknowledgement of the equal validity of each other's existence.

The mind thrives on comparison and evaluation and judgement. And most of us, it seems, most of the time, are mind-identified - and therefore addicted to superiority and inferiority. Our Egos and Identities delight in putting others down, and/or putting others above us. But to truly Speak in Equality we need to be disidentifying from our habitual self image, and re-identifying as something indefinable, as a face of Life Itself - because then we begin to feel the presence of the indefinable in everyone.

For the Ego, this freedom from specialness might feel disconcerting, but if we cannot tolerate it - then how can we Speak in Equality?! We might be intellectually signed up to political or social theories of equality - but until we can feel in our hearts that we are all equally-unique beings, with equally-unique and equally-valid destinies - then we won't be able to fully Relate in Equality.

As we renounce inferiority and superiority, and see our siblings, and let them see us - we Experience Equality. And that experience is amazement and admiration.

I SAY WHAT I FEEL; AND I FEEL WHAT I SAY, WHEN I SAY IT

Then there's Emotional Connection. This is our third shared understanding, and area of observation and practice. And all of this does take practice... To 'say what we feel, and not what we think'; and 'feel what we say, as we say it' is not on the school curriculum, nor something we imbibe naturally at home, nor something supported by the social norms of modern culture.

To not repeatedly re-state our beliefs and opinions; to not just recount facts; to say what we feel regardless of whether it's what we judge we 'should be feeling', or not; to let others See Into Us and not mask our feelings with our ideas; to risk being accepted or rejected; to Speak the Truth of Our Hearts boldly, humbly, respectfully - none of this is familiar to us, unless we have already devoted time to our own emotional re-education.

But unless we practice Emotional Connection ("I say what I feel; and I feel what I say, when I say it") - together - we will almost inevitably re-create the dry, dusty and claustrophobic world of egos and concepts and conflicts with which we are familiar - the alienated and numb, emotionally-destitute energy field of modern cultures. Whereas, if we practice Emotional Connection, we co-create another energy field; a field of authenticity and closeness - the Spirit of Another Culture...

SELF LOVE

This is perhaps our most important shared understanding: that we speak, not with self-judgement, but with Self Love.

It is based on the perception that to love and care for ourselves is only possible to the extent we have disidentified from our Egos; and identified, beyond it, as Unique Expressions of the Totality. Why? Because we have to be outside of our Egos to love them! The concept of Self Love, therefore, implies the presence of two: that there is one who loves and cares, and another who is loved and cared-for.

Our innermost, deepest sense of ourselves FEELS its Belonging - a Belonging unaffected by time or place - and it delights in its own, endless, creative possibilities. Our Ego, or Conditioned Self, on the other hand, is the part we play, our 'avatar', our unique, individual personality structure - the everyday 'me' with which we tend to be identified. And 'dis-identification' means that we shift our identification from our superficial conditioned self, to our deepest, conscious selves. From this deeper and expanded identification, we are then able to perceive our Ego/Conditioned Self, and understand its motivations, and care for it - and love ourselves.

This is no small matter. This is not a matter of a few Conscious Tribe Gatherings, and we've 'got it'! Grasping 'disidentification' intellectually is quick - but to live it is quite another matter... For most of us, the disidentification that enables us to Relate Consciously, in Presence and Love, evolves over decades.

The peace and stillness that allow us to see our own personalities clearly; the sense of Being-Loved and Universal Belonging that allows us to share even that of which our Conditioned Self is most ashamed; the ability to let go of the Conditioned Self's obsessive insistence on blaming, and

playing-the-victim, and escaping into numbness - for most of us, all of this arrives, as if by grace, gradually, over the years, as we Disidentify from our Conditioning, and Re-identify as the Indefinable Loving Beings we always were.

Yet without this Re-identification - this deeper recognition of ourselves as mysterious Beings of Consciousness and Love and Belonging - unavoidably, our Tribe Conversation sharings will be superficial and tedious - even if we have highly developed Spiritualised Egos, well-trained in 'Speaking from One's Own Experience', 'Speaking in Equality', and 'Speaking in Emotional Connection'! Which is why I said this fourth aspect is perhaps the most important of them all.

The dancing, or yoga, or Tai Chi that we do to open the Tribe Gathering, and the first part of the Conscious Relating Practice (when we're just with ourselves and our Belonging) not only prepare us for Tribe Conversation by helping us relax and find Center, after a long day at work, say - and by thus creating a peaceful atmosphere in which to share: they also prepare us by nourishing the Re-identification that will enable us to bravely speak the truths of our conditioned hearts.

As we Disidentify from the small-minded Conditioned Self, and Re-identify as what we always were: as mysterious beings with hearts that beat ceaselessly - just as they beat in every animal, in every bird, in every insect - in harmony with all of creation - we gradually become increasingly capable of Conscious Relating, of Relating In Love... Slowly, slowly - we look around at our Conscious Tribe, and we realise we're all becoming the loving beings out of whom a loving community culture could arise!

WE DON'T ONLY LISTEN TO WHAT OTHERS SAY, WE FEEL THE WAY THEY SAY IT

Finally, a note about the Quality of Our Listening, during Tribe Conversations (and beyond)... A note on what I like to call 'Listening with the Heart'. The core of this is that Listening is not a passive exercise. It is receptive, but it is not passive. The WAY in which the Conscious Tribe Listens; the Quality of its Listening, will open or close the energy field of the Tribe...

How to Listen with the Heart, actively? Well - everything we've said about 'How to Speak In Presence and Love' could be rewritten as 'How to Listen In Presence and Love'. And so, while another is sharing:

- we stay close to Our Own Unique Experience of the moment
- we breath, gently, in Loving Equality (50/50)
- we don't lose Emotional Connection with ourselves as we listen
- we breath, gently, inside the Totality, the Tao - and remain 're-identified' as 'A Face of the Goddess' - looking upon our conditioned personality with Self Love.

If the group listens in this way it becomes a supportive mirror for the person who is speaking. To the extent we are Present to Our Own Experience, that helps the speaker sense when they are speaking from Their Own - and when they have become disassociated from themselves. To the extent we're rested in the loving energy field of equality, that helps the speaker feel whether they are there with us - or whether they have exited into specialness and separation. To the extent we don't lose Emotional Connection - and don't only hear the speaker's words, but also feel the way they impact us - that helps the speaker stay emotionally connected. And to the extent we're (re-)identified as sacred, individual expressions of The Great Mystery - that helps the speaker be aware of how ego-identified they are as they speak.

When the speaker speaks they speak into the silence. The Tribe listens silently. But that silence isn't

empty - it is full. It is full of Presence and Love. It is relational. It is a relational silence. It is dialoguing energetically with the energy of the speaker. In this way, our Active Listening, or Listening with the Heart, is vibrant and live - and an essential part of Conscious Tribe Conversations.

TAKE CARE

In practice, these five aspects of Conscious Relating can't really be separated. Nevertheless, by way of self-education, you might like, one week, to all focus on Speaking from your Own Experience, and another week, on Speaking in Equality, and so on. But we do need to take care - because (as I intimated earlier), the Emotional Level is the where the Conscious Tribe is most likely to struggle, and stumble, and even fall apart...

As children we naturally depend on our biological families for our security and sense of belonging. Then in adolescence we transfer our sense of belonging to our society, to the collective. But if then, as now, our faith in the good intentions of our society is shattered; if, as now, we come to feel that not only does our society not care for us, but that it seeks to digitalise us, and transhumanise us, and use and abuse us - on what do we depend?

We might answer that we transfer our sense of belonging to The Whole, to Our Oneness, to being Human Creatures alongside so many other wonderful Creatures on this Earth; to recognising we ARE the Life Force that animates it all! But while we might be quick to answer, the heart is much slower - and trembles. This transference of our Sense of Belonging shakes us through and through. Our identities crumble around us. We are suddenly naked and free!

For some parts of us this can feel like a liberation, but for other parts it can feel terrifying. The society we once believed in, and depended upon, is gone. And a real, substantial, felt sense of 'being part-of everything' is not yet our direct experience. What then?! Endeavouring to protect itself, the psyche sabotages our progress. We find obscure objections to our freedom. We create conflict in the Tribe. We create distress, deviation and division.

And so, once again, I suggest we take care. I suggest we be aware - not only of the enormity of our stated material aim (to co-create nature-embedded Local Community Cultures), but of the enormity of our psychological, emotional and spiritual endeavour. And I suggest we respect our fears and resistances, and care for them within ourselves - because then they won't sabotage the clarity and beauty of our Conscious Tribes, and all we envision co-creating.



*Whatever we say about someone, or anything,
is not about that person or thing -
it's about our unique, personal, conditioned perception
of that person or thing.*

*Everything we say is about our perception.
Everything we say is a self-revelation.*

*When we don't pretend otherwise,
we relate wonderfully -
in grace.*

8

Tribe Gatherings, Recommendations

IF NOT NOW, WHEN? BUT HOW?

Today, as I write, I see technocratic megalomaniacs entering the names of the human race, one by one, into the log of a globally centralised, militarised A.I.. I hear them joking about genocide. I hear them boasting that in their Smart Cities, what's left of human life will be so intricately, biometrically controllable, that we will be like characters inside a video game they own and play. Yes, it's surreal! Are these our leaders? Have all the ridiculous villains in James Bond movies jumped out of the cinema screen, and hopped onto a train to Davos? No - they are as real as Mao and Idi Amin, Hitler and Pol Pot!

At the same time, I feel we're in a Time of Collective Emergence in which the Wizard of Oz's curtain has been lifted, and governmental and corporate authorities have been revealed - not just, as a bunch of double-dealing, infantile, self-important crooks - but as technocrat transhumanist fundamentalist fanatics who see us as needing-saving, themselves as our saviours - and believe their plans so universal, so worthy, and so grand that they need show no moral restraint.

Brick by crumbling brick, the once-majestic buildings of the great institutions - palaces and parliaments, court houses and universities - are coming crashing down inside our many minds. And without faith in these external authorities, many of us are questioning our values, and our lifestyles; many of us are seeing we've been conditioned to make choices that serve a heartless system, not ourselves or those close to us - and we are opening our lives and hearts to new possibilities. "Love and Revolution" proposes one possibility - forming Conscious Tribes - and then weaving them into conscious local communities...

Let's suppose you've been practicing Conscious Relating with some close friends, and that they've also been practicing with family and friends. And let's suppose that everyone's enthusiastic about the Conscious Tribes Vision - and wants to form one... What to do? Meet? What to do when you meet? Why meet? With what aims? What about the children? Should everyone make some sort of commitment? What other important considerations might there be?

In this chapter I want to make some recommendations I hope will be supportive... And they are recommendations - not instructions! I offer them as Starting Points, with the idea that gradually, over time, each Conscious Tribe can adjust them, as it sees fit. Please consider them a resource you can use to help you get started - and then adapt and develop. They are intended to help new Tribes find their unity and direction.

So, firstly, should you all meet? Regularly? Yes, of course! Why?

- to connect with each other, and celebrate
- to practice Conscious Relating (intimately, one-to-one; and also as a Tribe)
- to nourish and strengthen everyone, and the Tribe itself
- to contribute to the co-creation of a conscious culture

But here are some more specific recommendations...

SOME MORE SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

* Recommended Frequency of Gatherings: weekly (if they're fortnightly and you miss one, then you don't meet the Tribe for a month!)

* Recommended Commitment to Gathering Attendance: ideally, a hundred percent! Bear in mind that non-attendance can weaken the unity and potency of the Tribe - just as everyone's attendance can strengthen it.

* Recommended Conscious Tribe Size: 10 to 30 adults, plus the children. I feel this small Tribe size is crucial, because then you really get to know each other - and vulnerability and intimacy, generally speaking, are much easier with familiar faces, where trust has grown. This size also means there's time for everyone to be heard when the Tribe sits in circle. At the same time - the presence of around 20 adults can generate a lot of energy - enough to accomplish fairly big practical tasks together; and for there to be a spectrum of opinion, debate, and creativity.

* Recommended Commitment to the Conscious Tribe: initially, three months. This is intended to support Tribe cohesion - especially through tough patches (because everyone's promised not to leave when there are difficult feelings!) At the end of the three months, or whatever timespan was agreed - commitments can be renewed; people can leave, new people can come in...

* Recommendations for Forming and Re-forming the Tribe:

- co-create a Commitment Ceremony when you first decide to become a Tribe (see chapter 13)
- at the end of the timespan you all agreed to, if anyone has left, or anyone has joined - co-create another Commitment Ceremony, using Flexible Form (see below)

* Recommended Conscious Tribe Gathering Structure:

1. Opening: if people have been sitting in traffic, say, or come straight from the office, or had to rush to get there, or been touched by the Culture of Stress in some other way - you might like to dance together, or do Yoga or Tai Chi... something to loosen everyone up, and help them relax back into themselves (30-45 mins., approx.)
2. Practice Conscious Relating in pairs, either as Expression or Conversation (30-45 mins., approx.)
3. The Tribe Conversation. Practice Conscious Relating as a Tribe, as a Conversation. (60 mins., approx.)
4. A Short Conscious 'Closing' (Speaking Gratuities, perhaps: Embracing, perhaps...) (15 mins., approx.)
5. Fiesta! (No time limit!)

* Recommendations for the Tribe Conversation: as well as considering all of the recommendations already made in the three previous chapters, decide on the nature of Tribe Conversation before beginning. The Tribe Conversation can be

- spontaneous (as in the description in chapter 6)
- a 'round' in which each person has a set time to be able to share the emotional textures of their lives - their challenges, fears, joys, adventures... (this can be with or without responses from the Tribe after someone has spoken)
- an exploration of a specific subject

* Recommendations for Facilitation (of each Gathering):

1. Take it in turns to facilitate.
2. The role of the facilitator includes

- (a) reminding the Tribe of agreed timings.
 - (b) reminding everyone, if necessary, to breath consciously, to hold the meditation, to stay in their Belonging and Uniqueness - connected and close.
 - (c) reminding everyone to speak in the first person, subjectively - 'owning' their emotions (and opinions)
 - (d) reminding everyone, if necessary, to speak from the heart - to FEEL what they are saying.
- The facilitator's role is to serve. It is not to control. It is to suggest, not impose.

* Recommendations regarding Children:

1. Include all of the children, at least for a minute or two, in the Opening and the Closing of the Gatherings (so that the whole Conscious Tribe can see-and-feel itself as a Conscious Tribe).
2. Let babies, toddlers, children and adolescents be present during the Conscious Relating (in pairs, and as a Tribe) as long as they don't draw too much attention. And let them participate, if they're old enough and want to.
3. Have a separate space ready for the children, so that they can come and go (while you're all practicing Conscious Relating - in pairs/as Tribe)
4. Take it in turns, Gathering by Gathering, to be responsible for the Children's Space.

* Who to Invite? (Geographical Recommendation):

1. Ideally, everyone in the Tribe will live locally.
2. If this is not immediately possible, hold in mind the possibility that as Conscious Tribes become more popular, your current Conscious Tribe might subdivide into Tribes of people who live nearer to each other.

* Getting to Know Each Other (Recommendations):

1. As well as all meeting at the regular Conscious Tribe Gatherings, consider meeting as a Tribe for a whole day sometimes - especially early on, when people are just beginning to 'get the feel' of being a Tribe, and some people might not know each other very well yet. Once a month, or every six weeks, would be ideal!
2. In the early days, connect with other people in the Tribe between Gatherings. Speak on the phone, meet up. Especially with people who are new to you.
3. You might want to create a Telegram Group (or similar) for the Tribe. Remember this is NOT a substitute for meeting face-to-face!
4. Finally: if you can't attend a particular Conscious Tribe Gathering, write a message, and ask that it be read aloud - or record one, and ask someone to play it. This helps us stay connected.

"FLEXIBLE FORM" - CO-CREATING OUR OWN TRADITIONS

If every person comes to the Conscious Tribe with their own spiritual/existential path and practices, then how, practically, do we co-create the Openings and Closings of our Weekly Gatherings, or, say, a ritual to honour the birth of a child, or the death of someone in the Tribe, or a celebration to honour a solstice or an equinox? If different people have different ideas about how things are done - then how do we maintain our unity?

By using what I like to call Flexible Form. Flexible Form is a tool, a technique, that we can use to maintain our unity. For example: a Conscious Tribe wants to gather to celebrate the Summer Solstice... (And by the way, if we want to co-create communities that are embedded in the natural world, I would strongly recommend celebrating the turning of the seasons). So... in this particular Conscious Tribe there are people influenced by the Celtic Traditions, people influenced by Buddhism, and people whose spirituality was forged at raves, on MDMA, on the dance-floor. How do we celebrate the Solstice then?

We sit together, and agree a structure that includes everyone. We include, perhaps, Celtic nature-based ritual, Buddhist silent meditation, song, dance, and MDMA for whoever wants... NOW we have a form, a structure, for our celebration - our own, co-created form. And we try it out. And then, sometime before the next Summer Solstice - we meet again, and we talk about what we felt worked, and what we felt were the shortcomings - and we add and subtract to the form we had. In this way, year after year, we begin to establish our own tradition! A tradition that has the beauty and power of repeated Form - and yet the freedom and freshness of Flexibility. Our tradition has sacred form, as did the rituals and celebrations of pre-modernity, and in a very modern way, we structure and re-structure that form ourselves, together.

Flexible Form can be used, in exactly the same way, to structure and evolve ways of opening and closing the Tribe's Weekly Gatherings. A Tribe could co-create a Gathering Opening and review and adjust it every two or three months, for example. But more broadly, as we envision the Conscious Culture we seek to co-create, we can use Flexible Form to evolve our own traditions - rites of passage into adulthood for our children, for example - traditions aligned with our own seeing.

Over the last centuries, with the advancement of modernity, dogmatic, spiritual authorities have been increasingly rejected and abandoned - and the sacred community traditions that honoured the passage of the seasons, and the individual's passage through life, have decayed. But we need Traditions. Community is woven on loom of Tradition. But the Form must be Flexible - otherwise we'll end up in pre-modernity again!

*

DO YOU WANT CONSCIOUS TRIBE?

*Do you want Conscious Tribe? Do you want that Depth of Shared Journey?
Do you want to look around and see yourself surrounded by people
committed to letting go of their dependency on the dominant culture - and to
letting themselves depend on The Great Mystery, on Life -
and feel admiration?*

*Do you want to be surrounded by people who are letting go of the infantile
and neurotic state of conformity and obedience - and learning to listen to
their bodies and instinct and wisdom - and feel respect? Do you want to be
surrounded by people who no longer confuse vulnerability and weakness -
who know the strength of the naked heart -
and feel humbled?*

*Do you want to be surrounded by people who are Turning Away from the
alienated, disassociated, desecralised, dead-lifestyle of the Dominant
Culture - despite the relentless, insidious, subliminal, mass hypnotic
suggestion that it's glamorous, chic, cool and fabulous to live in a world of
concrete - ripped-out of our natural Belonging; torn from meaning; torn from
the beauty and mystery of the elements and the seasons and the animals and
the birds?! Do you want to be surrounded by such brave, beautiful and noble
souls? Would you feel honoured to be among them?
Would they return you to your nobility?
And you return them to theirs?*

*Do you want Conscious Tribe? Do you want to be among people who are
open and aware and visionary and trusting enough to give themselves
WHOLEHEARTEDLY to co-creating nature-embedded, loving, conscious
community cultures?*

*Somehow, despite the Dominant Culture's omnipresent, mass-implanted
suggestion that there is nothing else but itself; some people are Walking a
New, Ancient, Timeless Path - disregarding their Fear of the Unknown! Are
these your people? Are you one of them?*

Do I hear you say you are?

I am too!

*So - to add to Bob Marley's wonderful words: let's get together, and form
Conscious Tribes, and not just feel alright - but look around at each other
and feel grateful to be together, and draw strength and joy from our
togetherness - and feel the dignity and self-respect and invigoration of our
wholehearted, united commitment to Presentness, to the Naked Heart,
to Each Other, and to The Great Mystery Itself.*

Equality and Authority

TWO TYPES OF HIERARCHY

Existential Equality - the absence of any Existential Hierarchy - is fundamental to the Conscious Tribes Vision of Community Co-creation. I say 'Existential Hierarchy' to differentiate it from temporary 'Task-Based Hierarchy', which can be practical and efficient. This, I feel, is an important differentiation - especially for the anti-authoritarian ego of our era.

Existential Hierarchy negates our uniqueness. Uniquenesses can't be ranked. Existential Hierarchy places more value on one person's existence than on another's - on one person's journey through life than on another's. It pretends, for example, because of someone's V.I.P., Very Important Person, status - because of the high-importance society is awarding them - that their very existence is of high importance, that they are a highly important human being. But no unique life is more important than another. Nobody exists more than anyone else. We are all equally engaged in the act of existing! We all do as much existing as each other! We all exist equally. We all are Existential Equals.

Task-Based Hierarchy, on the other hand, is not only practical and efficient, but necessary. We decide to attend a Permaculture Workshop, for example. We arrive at the workshop and there is a task at hand (to learn about Permaculture). We give the workshop teacher temporary, Task-Based, Authority - and establish a temporary, Task-Based Hierarchy. We don't all have equal amounts of permacultural wisdom. We are not all permacultural equals! But even as we take notes, and admire our teacher's knowledge, we only-ever-always remain Existential Equals.

EXISTENTIAL EQUALITY

But Existential Equality is no small matter. The world's dominant cultures, it would seem, have lived restricted in Existential Hierarchies throughout the Patriarchal Era - for thousands of years, that is - at least! And almost all of us have been educated (that is to say, conditioned) into them. We are Creatures of Hierarchy.

Existential Equality, as against philosophical or political ideas about Equality, is a Radical Collective Evolutionary proposition. Some people wake up one day - and see it! Their competitive ego just falls away. They feel relieved of their fear and arrogance. They feel the peace and contentment of no longer jostling for importance. But for most of us Existential Equality is experienced gradually - as we 'work on ourselves', and disidentify from our conditioning, and come to Know Our Oneness. Gradually we begin to see that everyone is oneself, dressed in a different body and personality - with a universe as vast as one's own. This is Existential Equality. It is an experience. And not one (I imagine you'll agree) that most of us live in unshakeably. The experience is Indiscriminate Love.

This doesn't mean that everyone in a Conscious Tribe has to suddenly start pretending they love everything and everyone! It means Conscious Tribes are devoted to learning to live in Existential Equality.

MY AUTHORITY

By my-writing and you-reading this book - you and I are establishing a Task-Based Hierarchy. Just as, in the previous example, we gave the Permaculture teacher temporary, Task-Based Authority and established a temporary Task-Based Hierarchy - you are allowing me to share my Vision of Cultural Transformation; you are listening, considering, integrating...

So when does this temporary Task-Based Hierarchy end? Should every Conscious Tribe keep a copy of "Love and Revolution" at hand, and quote it whenever someone strays from its understandings or recommendations?! From generation to generation?! Forever?!

As I said in the last chapter, all of the concepts and recommendations in "Love and Revolution" are intended as starting points - for Conscious Tribes to then adjust and evolve in their own ways...

Back to the example of the Permaculture Workshop: we attend the workshop, we go home and to start with, we follow the teacher's recommendations... Then the seasons pass, and the years pass, and we begin to have our own direct experience of living permaculturally - and we begin to have our own ideas and creativities. Naturally, without opposition or conflict, we evolve our original Permaculture teacher's teachings in our own ways...

My recommendation is that you let the ideas and approach of "Love and Revolution" shape the way you meet, initially; and see how that feels, and see how that goes - before adjusting anything, if you want to. I wouldn't discard anything immediately. I'd recommend taking the Conscious Tribes approach seriously, respectfully, and giving it a chance - but to not be limited by it. I'd advise against revising the whole Conscious Tribes approach at the first gathering!

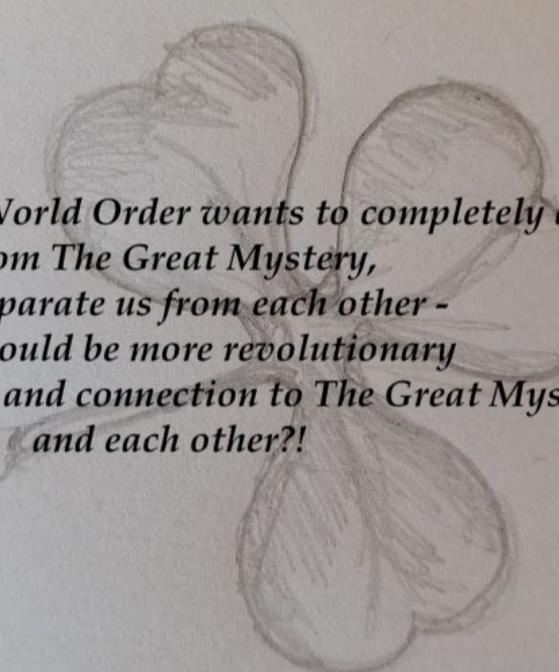
YOUR AUTHORITY

Perhaps you're loving this book - and are only too happy to give me the temporary Task-Based Authority to share the Conscious Tribes Vision. Still - we remain Existential Equals "only-ever-always".

From our unchanging Existential Equality YOU are giving me my temporary Task-Based Authority. And YOU can revoke it. YOU can put this book down and forget about it. YOU can apply it fully, or partially, or adjust it a little, or a lot... YOU decide. You are The Authority as to how much authority this book gets!

You are your Own Authority. This is crucial. Nobody is above you, nor below. And in a Conscious Tribe everyone remains their Own Authority. Why is this an absolute necessity? Because otherwise - how can there be authenticity? And without authenticity, how can there be real relationship, and intimacy, and Tribe?





*If the Great Reset / New World Order wants to completely disconnect us
from The Great Mystery,
and separate us from each other -
what could be more revolutionary
than our closeness and connection to The Great Mystery -
and each other?!*

10

Clear Minds

UNCLEAR MINDS

One of my most important conclusions, I feel - after a lifetime of devotion to the path of self-knowledge and the exploration of the nature of reality - is that we need clear minds.

I know people say we need to "come down from the mind to the heart". I know what they mean and, generally speaking - I say the same. But that doesn't mean we reject the mind. I believe we need clear minds because: *what our minds believe conditions how we feel, and how we act*. For example...

If I believe you are going to suffer excruciatingly in hell, forever, because you haven't accepted Jesus into your heart - then I might feel fear for you, or feel compassion towards you, and I might attempt to restrain your unchristian habits. Or if I believe there is no meaning in the universe, only a bitter and vicious competition for dominance and self-glorification - then I might feel contempt for your sentimental and romantic moral notions, and pride in my own courage to face the pain of the empty truth, and I might feel no hesitation in trampling you underfoot.

Even the way we express our love is conditioned by what we believe. As a fundamentalist Christian, I might crush (what I consider to be) my child's deviant sexuality - because of the love I feel for them. I might, genuinely, in my innermost heart, love my child. Yet being mentally convinced of the torment that awaits a lesbian or homosexual in hell - despite feeling my chest aching as it overflows with love - I might take actions to curb my child's instincts in ways that others would consider violent and hateful.

Or again, as a survival-of-the-fittest atheist for whom it is self-evident that those who rise and succeed and rule are amoral, above the moral codes of cowards - the lion-like, the tiger-like who do not flinch when called upon to tear others apart - I might crush my child's tendency to gentleness, or inclination towards fairness, or spiritual curiosity - because of the love I feel for them. Utterly certain that these (what I consider to be) weaknesses will guarantee my beloved child is used and abused by those more realistic, braver and more ready to lie, exploit and commit atrocities than them - and wanting nothing more than to protect my child; my eyes burning with tears of love - I might whip and beat and punish my child, for their own good, over and again, for years, until they toughen up.

You get my point. There is no emotion, and no action, that is not affected by our underlying beliefs.

However, in my opinion, both the fundamentalist Christian and the fundamentalist Survivalist/Atheist are examples of people with unclear minds - their clouded, disturbed minds resulting in clouded, disturbed behaviours.

How can I say that? How can I discriminate clear minds from clouded minds? By what criterion? What do I even mean by a 'clear' mind?

A CLEAR MIND

My criterion is honesty. A clear mind is an honest mind. A clouded mind is a dishonest mind. And

both the Christian and Survivalist/Atheist minds are dishonest. Why? Because they both assume to know the Absolute Truth about Existence. One says it's the Christian God, who sent his only son to save us, and so on. The other says that reality is matter, and all meaning imposed due to our fear of facing the facts.

But if we pause to acknowledge that all we ever experience is our own experience - that (although, of course, we CAN connect with others) nevertheless, we all inhabit our own unique realities - in other words, if we pause to think *honestly* - then we are not so quick to make a claim to absolute, objective, universal knowledge. In fact, we immediately see that any claim to Absolute Knowing - whether Christian, Survivalist/Atheist or Anything Else - is thoroughly dishonest. "How could anyone make such a claim?" we ask ourselves, "How can a finite, subjective being make a claim to infinite objectivity?"

A clear mind is an honest mind. It is also a humble mind. It is an innocent mind. It is a mind that looks freshly - that can observe and assess without preconceptions. It is the mind we see through when we are not blinkered or encumbered by unresolved psychological issues. It is a scientific mind, in the purest sense of the word. And it is a mystical mind, because it is a mind that is free.

What does such a mind believe?

It observes the spectacle of the stars, the elements, the seasons, the species, the generations, the atom - and concludes:

- (1) That we are an integral, inseparable Part of Existence, and yet
- (2) That Existence is undefinable - a Mystery. That we do not know The Absolute Truth about Existence because of the fact
- (3) That we all live within our own, unique Subjective Experience, and therefore
- (4) That we are All Existential Equals.

In my opinion, these are not arbitrary beliefs. They are not dogma. They have no motive. They are simple, unpretentious observations. They are clarity! Let's go through them:

Are we (1) Part of Existence? Well, obviously! We're not outside of it!

(2) Can we define Existence, objectively? Obviously not - because we are inside it, and we'd have to be outside of it to be able to see it as an object, and define it objectively.

Are we (3) all within our own Subjective Experience? Obviously! Even if we feel we're enlightened - we're still within our own Subjective Experience of enlightenment!

And are we (4), all in the same position - and therefore, in an existential sense, all equals? Obviously!

Again - I believe these are not arbitrary assertions. I believe they are the observations of unobstructed seeing. I believe they are the natural conclusions of a clear mind.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF A CLEAR MIND

And next, let's ask: if a clouded mind affects our emotions and behaviour in confused and disturbing ways - how do the beliefs of a clear mind influence our emotions, and impact our behaviour? What happens when our emotions and actions are conditioned by clear beliefs?

In my experience, clear beliefs provoke a sacred, respectful and loving way of being. We come to feel - not only that Existence is a Mystery - but that being part of that Mystery, as we all are - we are all aspects and embodiments of that Mystery. We look upon each other, and - just as we cannot say this-or-that is the Absolute Truth - we cannot pretend to know the Absolute Truth about each other. We see, feel and act towards each other with a sense of sacred respect.

And because we see ourselves as limited to our own Subjective Experience, we don't hit each other over the head with pretended Absolute Truths. We say... as I do to you now: that all I have written here is what I have come to believe. That yes - I suspect it is true for all people, at all times, in all places! I do! I suspect it is objectively true! And maybe it is! But maybe it isn't! I couldn't say - because I am limited to my own Subjective Experience! All I can say is: this is what I have sensed and felt, and these are the conclusions I have drawn.

I share my unique experience. You share yours. And we see we are all in the same situation. We see we are all confined to our uniqueness. And therefore - we see ourselves in each other. We see our sameness: every one of us an expression of the one, beautiful, painful, poignant human dilemma. And this results - not in family/friend/sexual relationships conditioned by dishonest, arbitrary beliefs (as in the examples above) - but in a love that has no terms or conditions. That doesn't mean we don't ever disagree. Let's be realistic. But it does mean that we can differ and discuss empathically - because we know our inalienable, underlying sameness. The clear mind evokes a non-personal, transpersonal, universal love - in other words: whenever we are feeling and acting in alignment with the clear mind (and I don't say this superficially), we love everyone!

STAYING CLEAR: EDUCATION AND TRIBE

And one final question: is clarity of mind a fixed state? Have you either got it or not? Does the weather ever vary in the mind of someone committed to clarity? Do clouds pass across a clear mind? Of course they do! Does a usually-clear mind sometimes pretend to know what's best for others - thus (a) posing as knowing The Will of the Universe, and (b) stepping outside of its own Subjective Experience? Of course it does! And are there a thousand and one stormy, unmet needs in us - which sometimes come between us and the clear seeing of our clear minds? Are we sometimes overshadowed by the desire to dominate, or the need to belong, or the demand for recognition, or the urge for revenge - and so much more? Of course we are! Of course our 'stuff' fogs our minds. Of course it's not easy to stay clear!

So what to do? What do we need in order to be able to live with clearer minds? You won't be surprised to hear me say: two things - we need education, and we need Tribe.

We need to dedicate ourselves to educating ourselves - and I don't mean intellectually. We need to devote time and attention to educating ourselves in FEELING the conclusions of our mental clarity - in deeply appreciating that we are an integral, inseparable Part of Existence, and that Existence Itself is an undefinable mystery. And we need to spend time FEELING what it means to live within our own Subjective Experience, as equals - alone, together.

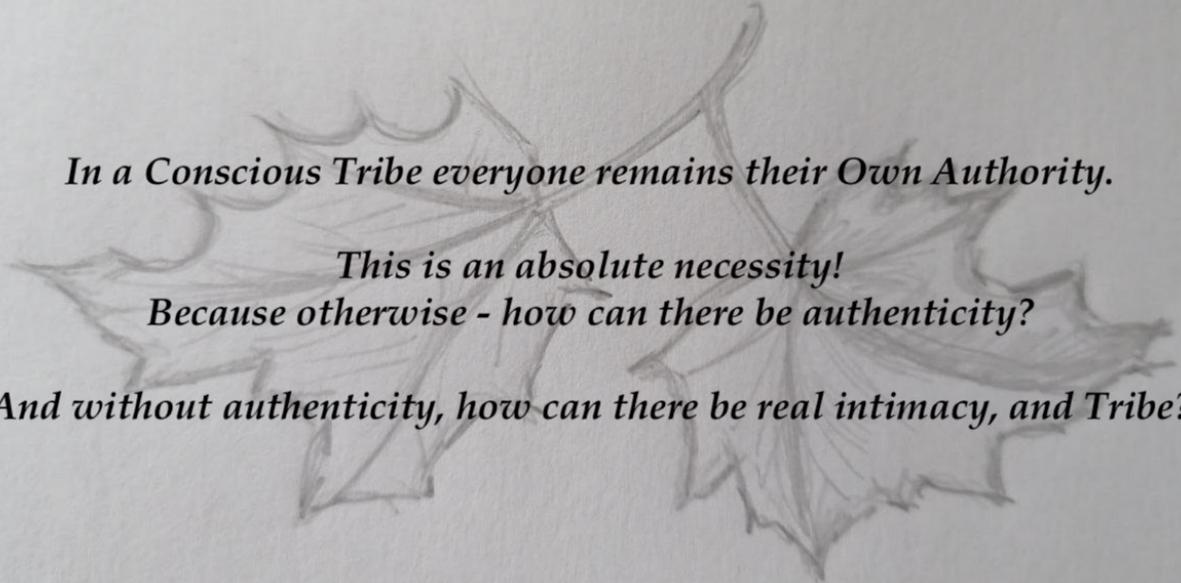
Whatever educational path or practice each of us chooses - it's working if it's strengthening our capacity to live our clarity of mind. A purely intellectual clarity is quite flimsy - but by FEELING what we feel when we think clearly, the mind matures, and becomes sturdy, and wise.

And as I have said time and again, I believe we need Tribe. We need help. It's not easy to stay clear. We've been conditioned/programmed full of distorted ideas, and disturbed emotions. We

struggle to live in clarity. We need Tribe - by which I mean: groups of friends, who are not just friends in the usual, loose sense of the word. We need groups of friends who are our Tribe because (a) we have a stated, shared understanding of clarity and cloudedness, and (b) because we have agreed to support each other in living in increasing clarity.

As a Tribe, we educate ourselves together. As a Tribe, we agree to be-there for each other, when one of us needs help. As a Tribe we agree to listen when someone feels lost to themselves. And as individuals we agree to hear the Tribe - if ever others feel our behaviour has become disturbing. We form a Tribe with friends by uniting around our shared understanding - and then, by living and not-living that understanding, together. Then - over time - if we stay united - and committed to clarity - together: the Tribe becomes a beloved, sacred family - bonded deeper than blood.

*



In a Conscious Tribe everyone remains their Own Authority.

*This is an absolute necessity!
Because otherwise - how can there be authenticity?*

And without authenticity, how can there be real intimacy, and Tribe?

11

Unity

COMMON GROUND

In the last chapter, and in this one, my aim is to stress the importance of our ideas and beliefs when coming together to form a Conscious Tribe. I feel it is crucial that when we begin to gather regularly, and begin to become a Conscious Tribe, we ensure we're Standing on Common Ground. This doesn't mean that we all need to adopt the same religion, or follow the same guru, or follow the same diet. So then what is this Common Ground?

Firstly, I would say that we are undogmatic. We accept that one person might talk in terms of Oneness, another in terms of Consciousness, another in terms of God, and others in terms of the Quantum Field, or the Universal Intelligence... We look towards the Essence (the intention) inside the Forms of each other's paths. We are focussed on the sameness of that Essence, not on the differences in the Forms. We remain humble - focussed on our own unique experiencing. We don't impose upon each other.

Secondly, we come together, not only understanding that We Are One, or all Children of The Goddess, or however we might like to put it - but also recognising that, for the most part, in our daily lives, we don't Live In Oneness, or as conscious Children of the Goddess. So we come together wanting to live our understandings more deeply. In other words, we come together with a sense of walking a path together - a path of self-education towards congruence.

Some teachers might say "there's nowhere to go, no path to be walked". And that, in my opinion, is true too. So let me put it another way: that the path we share as a Tribe is not to-somewhere - but to living consciously without obstruction, and without interruption, where we already are... We come together recognising we have inherited a soulless conditioning, and need de-conditioning and re-souling. And all we want that.

And finally, at the physical, tangible, material level, our Common Ground is that we all want to live as the sacred beings we are, honouring the sacredness of our every act - the sacredness of our house building, of our carpentry and plumbing, the sacredness of our sowing and harvesting and eating and drinking, the sacredness of our medicines, of the way we care for our children, the sacredness of our economies and exchange systems, and the sacredness of our birthdays and anniversaries and ceremonies and celebrations.

And since we see the dominant culture, for the most part, as alienated, superficial, infantile, frightened, divisive, belligerent and ultimately, psychotic - we all want to lessen our dependency on it - and nurture sacred, conscious, earthy, loving, local community.

And when doing so we are not only thinking of ourselves. We are caring for the generations to come - for those who will come to inhabit the culture we have co-created. Just as Indigenous Americans are said to have made their decisions considering "the next seven generations" - including not only human beings in their considerations, but "Mitakuye Oyasin" or "all our relations": the other creatures, the forests, the rivers... - we share a sense of setting up the infrastructure of a conscious community culture for us all.

ALL FOUR

And our Common Ground honours all four of the most prominent levels of our experiencing - the spiritual/existential, the emotional/psychological, the mental/intellectual, and the physical/material. I feel this is important to note - because not everyone honours all four levels. Different people exclude different levels. Some people exclude the spiritual level from their lives completely. For them it's all imagination. Other people don't value transformational work at the emotional level. For them it's self-indulgence. Others feel we're "too heady" and disparage intellectual discussion. And some 'spiritual people' don't honour the physical world - denigrating the material, and seeking to transcend it.

In my personal opinion, the exclusion of any level is due to a lack of understanding of their interconnectedness. I believe we need the Knowing of Our Oneness (spiritual level) in order to not be so tightly caught-up in our Egos (emotional level). I believe, as I just said, that we need clear minds (mental level) so that our action (physical level) is not controlled by the clouded, inherited ideas and feeling (mental and emotional levels). We need our humanity and humility, and kindness and compassion (emotional level) for our Action in the World (physical level) to be a genuine contribution. And we need to be Present in our Bodies, in our activities, in the here-and-now (physical level), for both our Consciousness (spiritual level) and our Love (emotional level) to be able to anchor in the world.

This Common Ground - this agreement to honour all four of these basic levels of our interaction with reality - results, over time, in Alignment, or Congruence, or Activation, or Coherence. In Eastern terms we could say the Chakras align. It starts to feel as if there's a gentle, blissful electric current circulating through our limbs. We find ourselves buzzing with the sweetness and comfort of Trust. And we find ourselves energised with a fresh confidence, and a calm power. This is not something we need "aim for" though. It just happens by itself - naturally, gracefully, inevitably...

COMMON VISION

In times like these, when the advancing tyranny is global; when it is equipped with technologies and weaponries only dreamt of by previous tyrants - and when it is, ABOVE ALL, fuelled and emboldened by a Grand All-Controlling Vision of a New Earthly Reality, many of us are bonded by A Unified Vision of Our Own. Not one grand centralised vision for all humanity, but a vision of visions - of multiplicity, of communities, of harmony in-and-as nature, of emotional maturity and awareness - and therefore, of gratitude, peace and celebration.

We feel we have embarked upon Our Own Great Reset! But not one we would want to trumpet as 'great'. We don't want to be part of some glorious crusade! Nor would we put it quite so (tellingly) digitally! But we feel we are part of An Emergence. We've been through Mass Disillusion and Redefinition. As Sociopathic Centralists have attempted to impose their Vision of a Digital Earth - with their rhetoric and needles and databases and guns - millions of us around the world can now testify that whatever little trust we had left in the Our Leaders' Good Intentions has been cast to the gutter for good - and that we now feel blessed with an unfamiliar freedom. We feel The Emergence inside us. This too is our unity. This thrilling, daunting feeling is also our Common Ground.

And for many of us, our Emergence has a vision: a Shared Vision to parallel the centralists' Grand Vision of a Reset Earth, of a Digital Global Gulag. Sometimes this Shared Vision is only implicit, sometimes it's only understood sentimentally, or intellectually. But it's there, bubbling away, under the surface of our resistance: the intuition that there is only one human heart; that there is only One Heart; that the earth is erotic and abundant; that to exist is to be blessed...

And what would the vision implicit in our Mass Emergence look like, if it was made visible? It is a vision of empowered local communities, not of Absolute Centralised Control; of people living embedded in nature, not in smart cities on lab food; of a culture with emotional intelligence, not the manufactured, brattish squabbling called war...

For the Conscious Tribe this vision is explicit. The Conscious Tribe sees itself as a conscious, active participant in the manifestation of the vision of the Emergence. That is its self image. It sees itself as a seed of a culture to come.

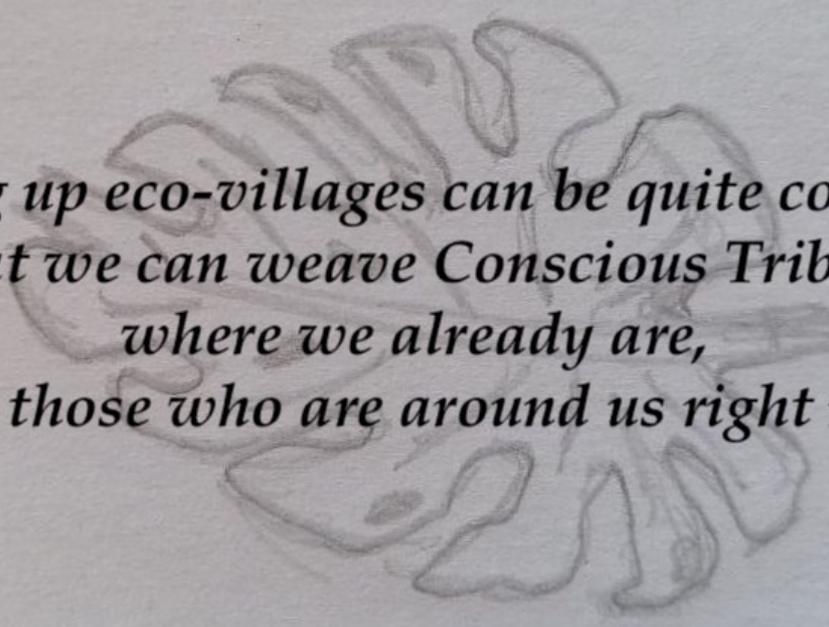
WE AGREE TO ACT

Some people see our Emergence as prophesied - as an astrologically-unavoidable Collective Awakening that heralds our entrance into a New Age - an Aquarian Age, a Satya Yuga, a future of peace and plenty. They say that pushed by the patterns of the stars, or by the weight of the turning of the Yugas, or by the force of some other Cosmic Energy more powerful than human intention - we are now destined, as a species, to cross a threshold into a New Age of harmony and happiness. In other words, that there's nothing we need do. But Conscious Tribes stand on the Common Understanding that even if a New Age IS prophesied, that doesn't mean we can be passive - neither in our inner worlds, nor in our outer worlds.

After all, if we live absorbed in thought, inside buildings; if we cannot circulate our grief and rage and pain; if we never talk to animals; if we blame others, pity ourselves, or live zoned-out in the Television or Religion... If our bodies are stiff and afraid; if we are not spellbound by the moonlight; if we are addicted to materialism and obedience; if we don't meet God, or the Goddess, or The Genderless Divinity when we have sex; if we still think we know something about The Absolute Truth - then... please!... let's be realistic! Do we honestly believe that one day we will all, unexpectedly, despite ourselves, wake up Enlightened in Eden? The Conscious Tribe is passionately idealistic, but it is also brutally realistic.

The Conscious Tribe holds this Belief in Common: that there IS a Global Emergence, that WE ARE that Global Emergence - and that if we don't act (spiritually, emotionally, and also physically, practically) then the Vision of the Emergence won't manifest. It will remain implicit.

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*Setting up eco-villages can be quite complex,
but we can weave Conscious Tribes
where we already are,
with those who are around us right now!*

12

Creativity, Contribution, Purpose

SHARED DIRECTION, VARIED CONTRIBUTIONS

Throughout this book I have been concentrating, above all, on the existential/spiritual, mental/intellectual and psycho-emotional aspects of coming together to become a Conscious Tribe. But our lives, of course, are also physical/material. We live in bodies, with bodily needs, and we are immersed in the material world through our senses - we touch and taste it, we see and listen to it, we smell it... We make things out of it. It is wondrous. We need it. We love it. At least in part - we are it! That's why - even if we sense death is not an end, but a portal - it's still so sad to die.

So... if a group of people have come to share Clear Minds, and stand upon Common Ground, and dedicated themselves to Conscious Relating, and become an intimate Conscious Tribe - how do they relate to the physical/material? And specifically, to the A.I. worshipping culture that seeks to track and control everyone's every movement and belief and desire... How does a Conscious Tribe relate to the unconscious, dominant, global culture - a culture that does NOT bathe in the Great Mystery of It All?

My answer is that every Tribe will need to answer this question for itself. Nevertheless, at the same time, I think we share a sense of a Unified Direction - whatever our different interests, abilities, and creativities. We agree, I believe, as I said in chapter 4, that:

"There are circumstances that favour the evolution of consciousness, and circumstances that thwart it.... Local community. Deep relationships. Responsibility for our locality. Contact with nature - with the trees, the animals, the insects and birds... with the weather, with the waxing and waning moons, with the equinoxes and solstices. Time out, down time, holy-days. Celebration, appreciation, gratitude. Local, poison-free food. Poison-free water. Creativity and contribution (as against wage slavery). All of these things favour the evolution and transformation of consciousness - and asphalt, street lights, traffic noise, plastic food, work-work-work, and junk, escapist entertainment don't. So here is a second revolutionary commitment: to adjust our lifestyles in ways that support and enhance our primary revolutionary commitment: the development of our Capacity to Choose Universal Love."

And as I just said, in the last Chapter "At the physical, tangible, material level, our Common Ground is that we all want to live as the sacred beings we are, honouring the sacredness of our every act - the sacredness of our house building, of our carpentry and plumbing, the sacredness of our sowing and harvesting and eating and drinking, the sacredness of our medicines, of the way we care for our children, the sacredness of our economies and exchange systems, and the sacredness of our birthdays and anniversaries and ceremonies and celebrations.

And since we see the dominant culture, for the most part, as alienated, superficial, infantile, frightened, divisive, belligerent and ultimately, psychotic - we all want to lessen our dependency on it - and nurture sacred, conscious, earthy, loving, local community.

And when doing so we are not only thinking of ourselves. We are caring for the generations to come - for those who will come to inhabit the culture we have co-created. Just as Indigenous Americans are said to have made their decisions considering "the next seven generations" - including not only human beings in their considerations, but "Mitakuye Oyasin" or "all our relations": the other creatures, the forests, the rivers... - we share a sense of setting up the

infrastructure of a conscious community culture for us all."

How we get there. Whether we will get there. Whether modern civilisation will disintegrate and be reborn - into the humble wisdom we already value, and try to live by. Whether we will be eradicated by an ever-better-informed, control-mad, ruthless, militaristic, dominant culture. Whether we will thrive in the outlands, well away from the standardised superficiality of the Smart Cities... Who know?! And since we don't know - I don't feel we can prescribe "one way for all". I think our shared direction is clear. But within that, I believe, each Tribe will need to direct its creativity and make its contribution(s) - according to its own interests, and knowledge-base, talents and possibilities.

TRIBE CONTRIBUTION(S), INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION(S)

Once we commit to becoming a Conscious Tribe - to uniting, and caring for each other, and co-creating together - we amass an energy that is more than the sum of its parts. The energy field of the Tribe energises everyone. The new Tribe is suddenly pregnant with powerful creative possibility... Not an energy to be wasted!

And not an energy to be rushed! I would advise not to think "what would be the optimal contribution(s) we could make?", but rather "what contribution(s) enthuse us?" The Tribe, depending on its size, might have two or three main creative focusses...

At the same time, every tiny, individual (physical/material level) act that brings us closer to a Conscious Culture is a contribution in itself - whether that's showing the children how to plant vegetables, reducing household waste, picnicing in the forest where you can't hear cars, car sharing, exchanging goods and services without using the banks' money, learning to knit and stitch and make our own clothes... Of course, the list is limitless.

Once we're continuously returning to our breath - to our Oneness and Uniqueness - and relating with everyone as profound equals - there will be things we just can't do anymore, and others we feel we just have to. Our relationship with the physical/material will transform naturally - though not without effort! The energy field of the Tribe will support our individual contributions too.

And we also contribute by what we don't do - by what we let go of. Generally speaking, I'd say our collective and individual journeys towards a Conscious Culture are journeys of simplification. It's a process of letting go of the complexity of the lifestyle we've been sold. It's a process that can take years. And it's important to recognise all of our small - and big - achievements... Someone switches to a fluoride-free toothpaste and stops drinking tap water; someone else stops buying chemical foods; someone stops listening to 'the news'; someone gives up Netflix; someone throws away their TV... Every little letting go is a step on the path of freedom from our dependence on, and trust in, an undependable and untrustworthy culture.

Every tiny conscious letting go contributes to the demise of the abusive, dominant culture. And every tiny new habit we form hastens the arrival of the Conscious Community Culture we envision.

ALIGNMENT AND PURPOSE

This inclusion of the material/physical level, as I have said, aligns us. We might be spiritually open, open minded, and open hearted - but when we then also open to physical reality, all four main levels of our experiencing come into alignment. The circuit completes - and we are plugged in! We feel

energised, invigorated... The spiritual flows through our bodies into the material, and the material becomes an offering to spirit. Energy circulates inside us like a bubbling river - and we feel happy!

This happens both individually, and as a Tribe. We feel self-respect, individually - and the Tribe feels proud of itself. Everything seems to make sense! Individually, we feel ourselves aligned with our unique personal life journeys - and as a Tribe we feel aligned with humanity's collective evolution. We feel we are LIVING our truths - not just talking about them, or meditating on them! We feel clarity, and completion - and a humble, bold confidence... Perhaps above all - when we bring the material/physical into harmony with the existential, emotional and intellectual - we feel a sense of purpose.

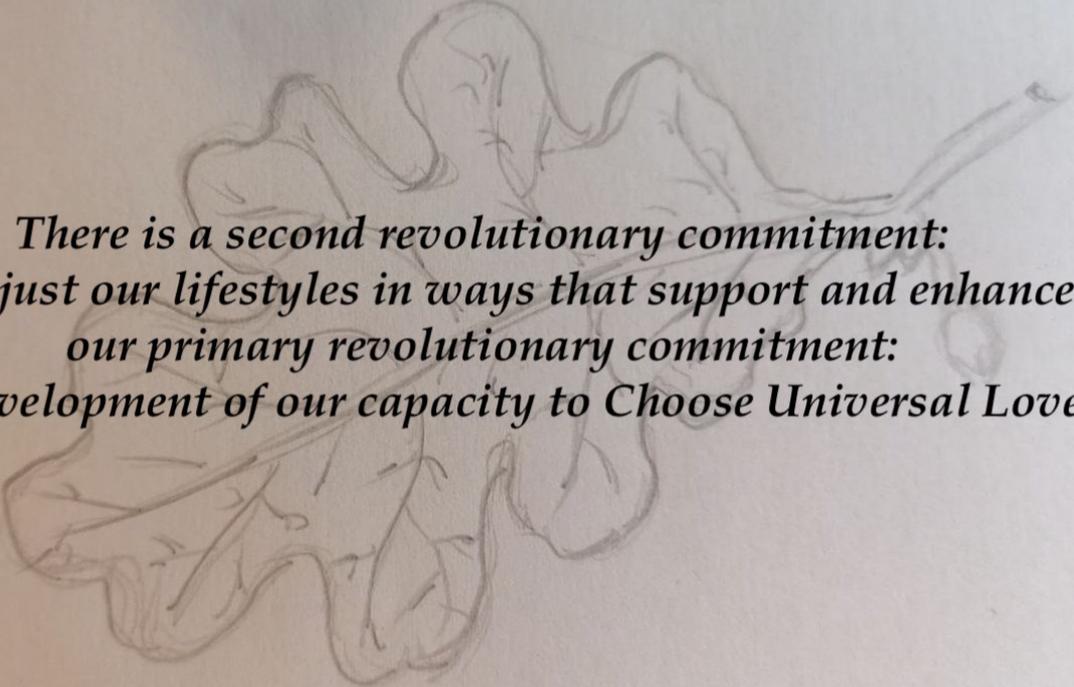
Not an invented purpose. Not a self-glorificatory purpose. Not ambition. It is "purpose in service". We feel in service of the One Heart of All Creation. We feel we can sense the way the Tao's flowing - and we feel we're in that flow!

We are not obsessed with our purpose. We are not possessed. We are not even attached to the outcomes of our contributions. We just do our best. But just as there have been other eras like our own - eras of intense existential choice; just as many of our ancestors have resisted That Which Hates Life because it fears Life, and purposed their days, and even sacrificed their lives, in the name of their Love of Life - we now, in our own twenty first century way, take up That Same Purpose, and make it our own.

We choose to gently surrender our dependencies, and find new comforts. We choose to simplify, and toughen-up a bit. We choose to gently surrender our hyper-individualism and isolation, and come together with our siblings in Tribe - in Conscious Tribe.

We choose to give and receive warmth and strength, and learn to Live Together in Oneness, and Be the Change, and live aligned and free!

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*There is a second revolutionary commitment:
to adjust our lifestyles in ways that support and enhance
our primary revolutionary commitment:
the development of our capacity to Choose Universal Love.*

13

Forming A Conscious Tribe

Here are some suggestions as to how you might go about forming your own, local Conscious Tribe...

NATURALLY

Perhaps the most natural way of forming a Conscious Tribe is to share the Practice of Conscious Relating with those close to you... As you introduce the practice to a partner, and then a friend, and then a biological family member - and they then share the practice with people they are close to - people will experience the depth and beauty of Conscious Relating, and the possibility of becoming a Conscious Tribe will soon be obvious.

At the same time, I'd also recommend all reading Love and Revolution (or listening to the audio version), and talking about it. Who resonates with it? Who is inspired by it? Do people concur with concepts like Our Belonging, Not Knowing (The Absolute Truth), the Subjectivity of our Experiencing, our Existential Equality, and so on? Do people feel we need to include all four most-prominent levels of our experiencing? Who stands on Common Ground? Who wants to participate in the co-creation of a Conscious Culture for the generations to come?

You might want to agree to meet once a week to discuss all of this - and above all, to have the opportunity of doing the practice with different people, and to be able to practice Conscious Relating as a group.

As this process evolves there will come a point when the air will be full of the question "OK - so shall we commit to becoming a Conscious Tribe, or not?"

Don't shy away from the question. Let it be present. Feel it. Ask "are we REALLY committing to a shared journey of self-education and transformation? Are we really committing to being emotionally naked in front of each other - to seeing and being-seen, to loving and being-loved? Are we REALLY committing to becoming a non-biological Extended Family? Are we really committing to Each Other?"

And ask "do we REALLY want to commit to Being the Change - to being the seeds of a new Conscious Culture? Do we really choose the revolutionary commitment - not only to learn to live in Universal Love - but to adjust our lifestyles in ways that support and enhance our learning? Do we choose - not only to finding ways of surviving the Dominant Culture's impositions, but to becoming proactive agents of the co-creation of an alternative culture?"

These are the larger, deeper questions, but I would also advise re-reading the recommendations regarding commitments in Chapter 8, and contemplating possible agreements as to how often you'd like meet, how long you're committing to do this, and so on...

And at a certain point, when it's clear that you DO want to become a Conscious Tribe, and everyone's prepared for their life to change - probably, for most people, quite radically - I'd recommend co-creating a Commitment Ceremony: a ritual in which everyone states their commitment to each other, and to the Tribe.

The ceremony needn't be esoteric! It can be quite simple. It might just be that, one by one, each person announces their commitment in their own words, and says what that means to them. Or it might be more elaborate...

The 'secret' of ritual is in symbolic acts. So, for example, rather than ending with the words "I commit to this new Tribe" each person, after speaking, might place a candle in the middle of the circle... This is a symbolic act. The candle symbolises them. It represents them. And as one candle after another is placed in the centre we all have a visual image, and a felt experience, of the formation of the Tribe, and of ourselves as part of it.

INITIATING AN EXPLORATION

This 'natural' way of forming a Tribe might not be feasible for you, in your particular situation. You might, for example, have just moved - and not know anyone locally. So another, perhaps more deliberate way of forming a Conscious Tribe would be to initiate a process, a journey of exploration, in the local area.

Rather than sharing the practice of Conscious Relating spontaneously, encouraging your friends to do the same, beginning to meet regularly, and eventually committing to uniting - you might prefer to announce or publicise your desire to form a Conscious Tribe, and call an open meeting.

And in your invitation to the meeting you could let people know how to download Love and Revolution (the written and recorded versions) - so that they could make an informed choice as to whether to come to the meeting.

And I would recommend doing the practice of Conscious Relating a.s.a.p. at the meeting. In other words, to not just sit and discuss the Conscious Tribes proposal - which could easily become a purely mental/intellectual exercise, and have little or no impact on The One Heart we all share. I would recommend using a Guided Conscious Relating Audio, and doing the practice in pairs - BEFORE discussing the proposal.

After having had a felt experience of the practice and knowing, at least to some extent, what it means to relate consciously in presentness and closeness; and therefore understanding, at least to some extent, what we mean when we say "the culture we now co-create will be made of us", and "cultures are relational systems, so we can only co-create a conscious culture if we learn to relate consciously", we can THEN talk about the Conscious Tribes proposal within a shared, felt, more informed context.

I wouldn't expect the discussion to be a Tribe Conversation in which everyone was breathing consciously ("breath to self, breath to others"), only speaking subjectively, self-revealing, and listening supportively. That wouldn't be a realistic expectation. But at least everyone could be encouraged to speak subjectively - to humbly speak their own, unique, limited experience without posturing and pretending it was something more than that.

Close the meeting respectfully, and call another. I would expect there to be less people the next time. Every Exploration will be different, but generally speaking, I would expect each Exploration to be a whittling down - until only the people who were profoundly interested in the proposition remained.

Meet again and again. You could use the Recommended Conscious Tribe Gathering Structure that I suggest in Chapter 8. Practice Conscious Relating. Discuss the Conscious Tribes concept. And then,

eventually, you'll arrive (like the people following the 'natural' way of forming a Tribe), at a point when the air will be full of the question "OK - so shall we commit to becoming a Conscious Tribe, or not?" Now your Shared Exploration and the Natural Way of forming a Tribe become the same. You too begin to move towards a Commitment Ceremony.

OTHER POSSIBILITIES

There are perhaps unlimited ways in which a Conscious Tribe could be formed. Here are a few more possibilities...

Rather than forming a Tribe 'naturally', or Initiating an Exploration (both of which are processes of several months), you could convene a weekend 'workshop'. Whether it was for family and friends only, or an open invitation in the local area - you could meet together morning, afternoon and evening - and in that way have the equivalent of six or seven weekly meetings in one weekend!

Here are some suggestions:

- Begin on the Friday evening (this tends to make the weekend much fuller - because people don't spend the Saturday morning accustoming themselves to being there, to 'arriving energetically')
- If possible, meet at a venue in the countryside.
- If possible, all stay over on the Friday and Saturday nights (make the weekend 'residential').
- Use the recommendations in Chapter 8 to structure the morning/afternoon/evening sessions (particularly the 'Recommended Conscious Tribe Gathering Structure' and 'Recommendations for Facilitation').
- Devote different sessions to the different ways of doing the Conscious Relating practice.
- If people feel ready, make your agreements - and end with a Commitment Ceremony!

The advantage of this format, as I said, is that it is fast. The downside to this format is, yes, that it's fast! And for people who are just getting to know each other, and who have little experience in the practice of Conscious Relationships - it might be too much to ask them whether or not they want to commit to being part of a Conscious Tribe, after just one weekend together. But you could also organise a workshop without going into the issue of commitment, or you could organise several workshops - there are so many possibilities...

If you feel you'd like some help in setting up a weekend of your own, please feel free to get in touch. I'd be happy to talk it over with. Or if you'd like me to come to your local area and facilitate a weekend for you, again - just get in touch...

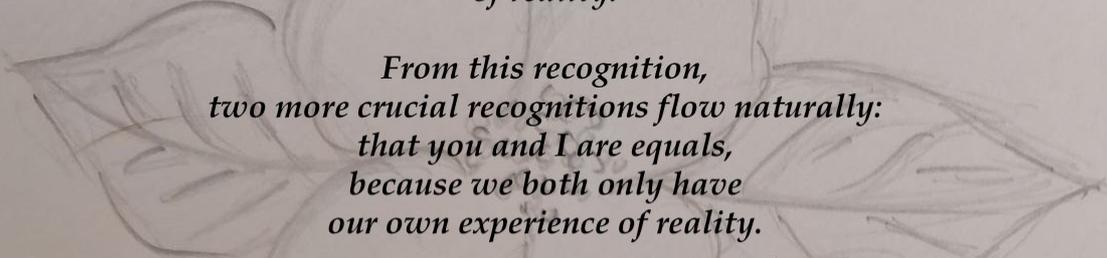
Another possibility would be to ask me to run an Online Conscious Relating Course especially for you and your friends, or your group, or people in your local area. This would give you all a firm foundation in the Conscious Tribes outlook and experience, which you could build upon afterwards - until you felt ready to form your own Tribe.

And yet another possibility would be to ask me for a Private Session on Conscious Relating. This could be for you, individually (to help you feel more confident as you began a 'natural' process of Tribe formation, or Initiated an Exploration towards the formation of a Conscious Tribe), or it could be for a group of local people interested in the proposal (also to help everyone feel more confident in their understanding of Love and Revolution, and the techniques of Conscious Relating).

There are, no doubt, many, many more ways in which a Conscious Tribe could come together, but these are the ways that come to me now. There is more information on resources and support in the last chapter. If you decide to Form a Tribe using any of the methods I've suggested, or any other

method, and would like to share your experience with me - I would love to hear from you! And if you begin Forming a Tribe but feel stuck or unsure in some way, and feel I might be able to help - again, just get in touch. I am here in service of this vision.





*I begin with one crucial recognition:
that I only have my own experience
of reality.*

*From this recognition,
two more crucial recognitions flow naturally:
that you and I are equals,
because we both only have
our own experience of reality.*

*And, since neither you nor I experience the totality of reality -
we don't know The Absolute Truth -
and reality remains
an exquisite, magnificent, miraculous
Great Mystery.*

14

Integrating The Conscious Tribes Approach

(into Existing Groups, Organisations, Communities, etc.)

SMALLER GROUPS

Another possibility is not to start a Conscious Tribe from scratch, but to integrate the Conscious Tribes approach into a group, organisation or association, or community to which you already belong.

By 'integrate' I mean: letting your existing group's sense of itself absorb the Conscious Tribes proposal, and be transformed by it - so that, as well as continuing to do whatever it was already doing, the group now also becomes a Conscious Tribe. This may or may not mean adjusting the structure of how you meet, but it will almost certainly mean a deepening - a deeper unity, a deeper intimacy, and a deeper, more expanded sense of purpose.

Let's imagine, for example, a meditation group that meets regularly - and let's imagine the Conscious Tribes proposal has resonated with everyone... They have been mainly focussed on the existential/spiritual level of self-enquiry and self-realisation. Now they decide to add Conscious Relating and Conscious Tribe Conversations to their meetings - to make things more intimate (emotional level); and Local Activism, the development of a resilient community infrastructure, (the physical level) to their concerns.

Or let's imagine a (mainly physical level focussed) Local Action Group that meets regularly to campaign for citizens' rights. The Conscious Tribes Proposal resonates with them too. They become interested in opening up to the spiritual and emotional levels - so they decide to add sacred Openings, and the practice of Conscious Relating, to their meetings.

And as I said, 'integration' is more than just adjusting the structure of one's meetings - it is a deepening, and an expansion. Friends become family, and the group's sense of itself expands, as it comes to situate itself in our Belonging - each person tenderly, humbly, passionately part of the Emergence of our times, in service of our collective evolution.

ORGANISATIONS, ECO-VILLAGES AND COMMUNITIES

If a larger organisation resonates with the Conscious Tribes proposal, and decides it wants to integrate it - it can do so by 'subdividing by locality' - in other words, whatever the organisation's overarching purpose, it can invite its members to cluster in Conscious Tribes of people who live near each other. This sub-dividing is important because it is difficult, if not impossible, to embody the very intimate, personal, loving spirit of the culture we seek to co-create if we are so many that we hardly know each other.

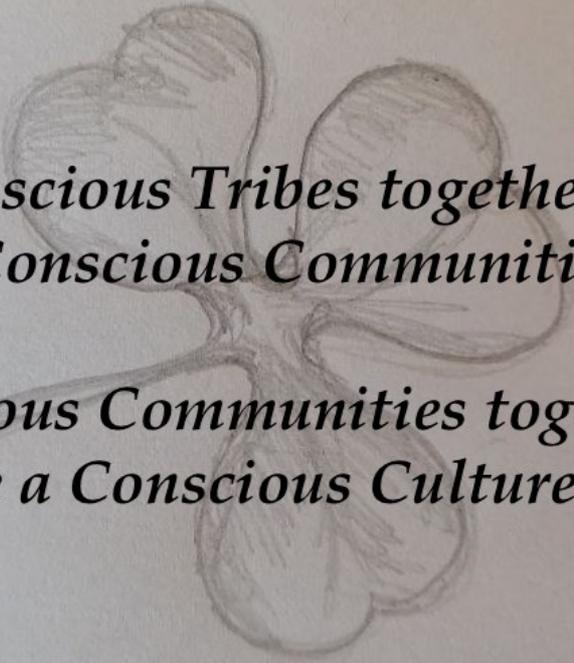
Every organisation is different, and the integration of a new vision into an organisation's existing vision will probably be a subtle and complex endeavour. However, potentially, these smaller Conscious Tribes can then be woven together in a horizontal, egalitarian power structure - such as Sociocracy - transforming not only the quality, the soulfulness and heartfulness, of the organisation - but also transforming the organisation into a community.

Similarly, an ecovillage, or intentional community, might want to integrate the Conscious Tribes proposal - and it too can 'subdivide by locality'. Even if a community is already organised in overlapping, interdependent circles of equals (as in Sociocracy) - such as the circle responsible for the animals and allotments, the circle responsible for maintenance and construction, the healthcare circle, and so on - another 'layer' of interdependent circles (the Conscious Tribes layer) can be added alongside the existing, task-based layer - enriching the connectedness and depth of intimacy of the community.

SUPPORT

Finally, echoing what I said at the end of the last chapter: if any group would like to share its experiences of integrating the Conscious Tribes Approach with me, I'd love to hear from you. And please do get in touch if you feel stuck or unsure in some way, and feel I might be able to support you.





*Weaving Conscious Tribes together,
we co-create Conscious Communities.*

*Weaving Conscious Communities together
we co-create a Conscious Culture.*

15

Mark the Mystic Activist

I was born in 1954, in London. I have been a hippie, a monk, an author, a psychotherapist, and a homesteader. Today I live off-grid, not far from Barcelona, and am absolutely serious when I jokingly call myself 'Mark The Mystic Activist'...

I was born into a non-religious Jewish environment. There was Tribe, there was community. But I couldn't accept the authority or the beliefs, which seemed arbitrary, not absolute - and controlling, not freeing. I came to feel I had to leave this first experience of belonging to a Tribe, to a community - my first, cosy, childhood experience of belonging - and at 17 I left...

After my years of hippie wandering, from 24 to 34, I spent ten years as a Hindu monk - and had an even deeper and more intense experience of the unity and closeness that being part of a Tribe can bring. But at the same time, it was also a deeper and more intense experience of rigid authority and hierarchy, and of unquestionable beliefs - so that, finally, I felt I had to leave that community too.

I wrote a book 'Sex, Spirit & Community' in the late 1990s - trying to clarify what kind of Tribe I was looking for. And in my forties and fifties I co-founded and co-directed a project that promoted community based on a collective understanding of gender. We formed self-knowledge, growth and personal development groups for men, women and couples (not just heterosexual). At first it was wonderful, but little by little, I came to feel that this collective approach to gender was provoking too much anger in the women, and too much guilt in the men - and although I'd co-founded the project, I felt that, once again, my search wasn't going to end there...

And so, at almost 70, after a lifetime of exploring how community is woven, trying to unite everything I'd learned, I started the Conscious Tribes project - still convinced, in fact more convinced than ever, of the beauty and importance, for most if not all of us, of having our Tribe.

As I said at the beginning of this book: Conscious Tribes are local groups of 10, 20, 30 people - united spiritually/existentially, united psychologically/emotionally, and united creatively, in their action - in the co-creation of a conscious culture. After so many years of exploration that might seem a very simple vision - and I think it is - but it's taken me a long time to get here!

*

In my long-term vision, these Tribes interweave and form Local Communities; and these Local Communities interweave to form a new extended culture... The first thing then, of course, is to form Our Tribes, our non-biological families, values-based families - our Families of the One Heart.

But forming Conscious Tribes hasn't been easy. I have been busily calling meetings, and promoting the concept, and inviting people to start their own Tribe - since before the Covid Extravaganza. There's been a lot of interest in my articles, interest in my online courses, and so on - but few people have actually formed a local Tribe.

I have said to myself that people are oh-so-busy. And of course, they are. I have said to myself that people don't long for Tribe because they've never known Tribe - and we don't miss what we've never known. And I think that's true too. I have said to myself that the market place is flooded with philosophers and preachers and manifestos and paths - so that it's hard to get heard. And again, I think that's true too.

But I feel the main reason Conscious Tribes are only forming now, after several years of endeavour, is that I have been EXPLAINING them, rather than proposing an EXPERIENCE of them. I've been lecturing about them, and answering questions about them - but I haven't been offering people a direct experience, 'a taste of Tribe' - so that even if my words sounded like good ideas, they remained just that, good ideas.

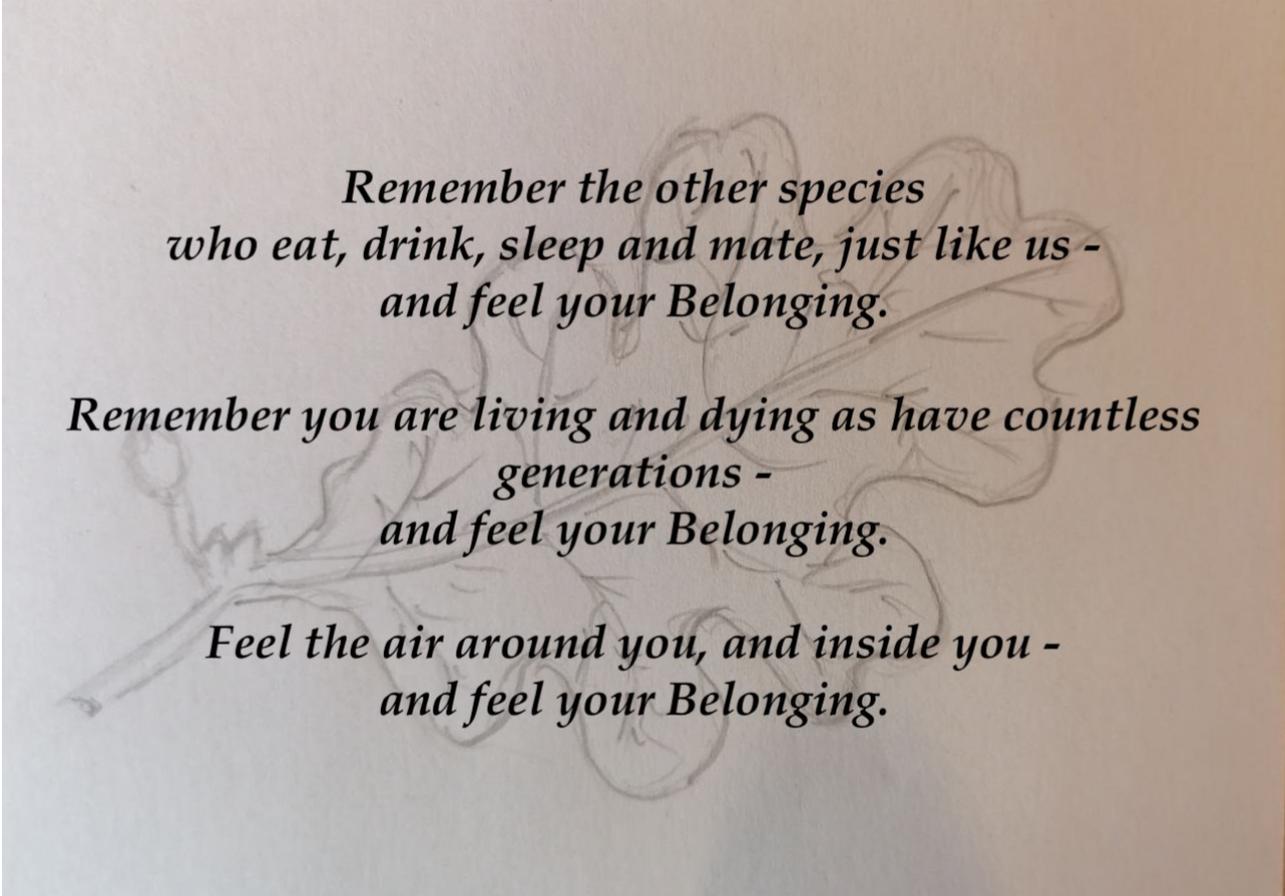
It's one thing to talk about intimacy and Belonging, a shared transformational journey, and united purpose and creativity - it's quite another matter to give people a way to start to feel it all.

Of course - I can't offer people the experience of a being part of a local Tribe they don't yet have! But over the last few years I have developed and refined the Practice of Conscious Relating, which can be repeated with one person, and then with another - until we know for sure that it IS possible to Love everyone... until we know we can be accepting and embracing of everyone else's craziness, (because we are accepting and embracing of our own) - until we know we can see and feel and love the Essence of Anyone (because we have come to see and feel and love ourselves).

The taste of the practice of Conscious Relating IS the Taste of Tribe. It is the taste of being present, here in The Unknown, in The Great Mystery, together - each of us a sacred mystery to each other, each of us a sacred mystery to ourselves. Please - take it, and try it!

And please - feel free to start your own Conscious Tribe! You don't need my permission, or anyone's permission, to start a Tribe of your own!

*



*Remember the other species
who eat, drink, sleep and mate, just like us -
and feel your Belonging.*

*Remember you are living and dying as have countless
generations -
and feel your Belonging.*

*Feel the air around you, and inside you -
and feel your Belonging.*

16

Creative Commons, Resources & Support, Contact & Staying in Touch

CREATIVE COMMONS

This book has no license at all - Creative Commons or otherwise!

OF COURSE you are welcome to share it!

And OBVIOUSLY I hope you will do so respectfully. I'd appreciate you naming me as your source, and giving my contact details.

RESOURCES

1. This Book.

You can download free copies of "Love and Revolution" (written and audio versions) from the Conscious Tribes Telegram Channel, or from my website. I'd recommend printing one out!

2. The Audios

You can also download free Conscious Relating Practice Audios. In these recordings I guide you through the Practice of Conscious Relating, so that you don't have to worry about the timings, or how you're supposed to be breathing, or anything else. You can just let yourself be carried through the Practice.

3. Guide Sheets

You can also download Chapters 5 and 6 ("The Practice of Conscious Relating between Two People" and "The Practice of Conscious Relating as a Tribe") for free - as separate, decorated Guide Sheets - to support you in deepening in the practice.

**WITH THIS BOOK, THE GUIDE SHEETS AND THE AUDIOS -
YOU HAVE ALL YOU NEED
TO START TO FORM YOUR OWN LOCAL CONSCIOUS TRIBE!**

SUPPORT

If you feel you'd like some extra support from me, at the moment I am offering...

1. Private Sessions

You can contact me for a private session (normally online) - to experience the Practice of Conscious Relating, and address any questions or concerns you might have. I ask for a Voluntary Contribution in exchange. I exclude no one for financial reasons. You can find the full information on the Telegram Channel, and on my website.

2. Online Courses

You can sign up for an online course that explores Conscious Relating and the Conscious Tribes

proposal. These courses are limited to 12 people. They consist of five, weekly video-conferences, 'homework' (people meet online between the video-conferences to practice Conscious Relating), and an online forum where people share their experiences of Conscious Relating. I ask for a Voluntary Contribution in exchange. Full info on both the Telegram Channel and my website.

3. Weekend Workshops

If you are an interested group of friends, or community, or club, or organisation, and would like me to come to your local area and facilitate a Weekend Workshop especially for you - to deepen your shared understanding and experience of Conscious Relating and The Conscious Tribes Vision - please get in touch.

CONTACT / STAY IN TOUCH

You can contact me, Mark, and stay in touch with the Conscious Tribes Project, via the Conscious Tribes Telegram Channel:

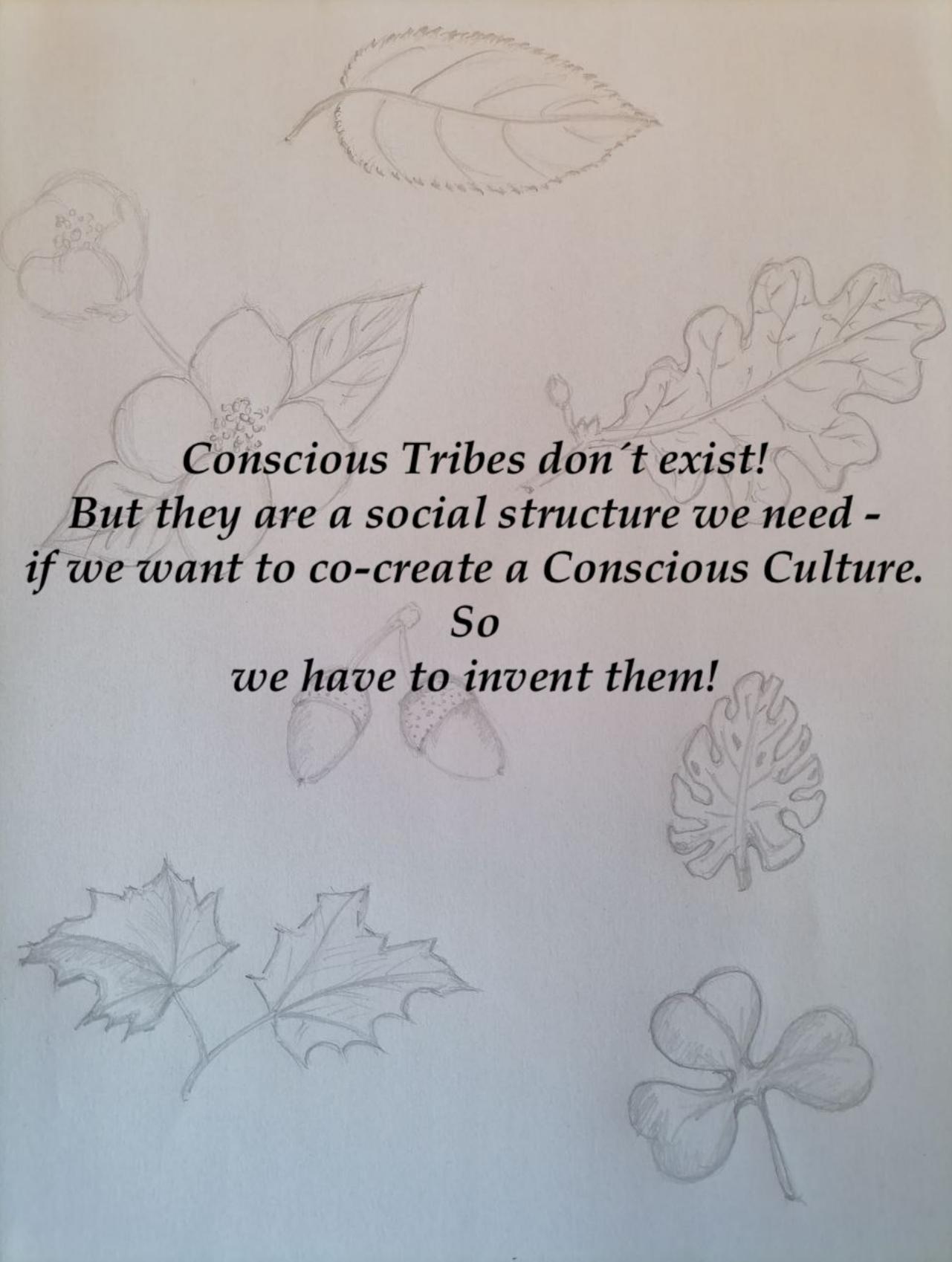
<https://t.me/conscioutribes>

And via my Website:

<https://www.markthemysticactivist.com>

(There's also a Spanish Telegram Channel: <https://t.me/tribusconscientes>)



The background of the image features several pencil sketches of botanical elements. At the top center is a single leaf with serrated edges and a central vein. To the left is a flower with a cluster of stamens. Below it is a larger flower with a similar stamen cluster. To the right is a large, lobed leaf, possibly an oak leaf. In the center, there are two acorns. At the bottom left are two maple-like leaves with pointed lobes. At the bottom right is a four-leaf clover.

*Conscious Tribes don't exist!
But they are a social structure we need -
if we want to co-create a Conscious Culture.*

*So
we have to invent them!*